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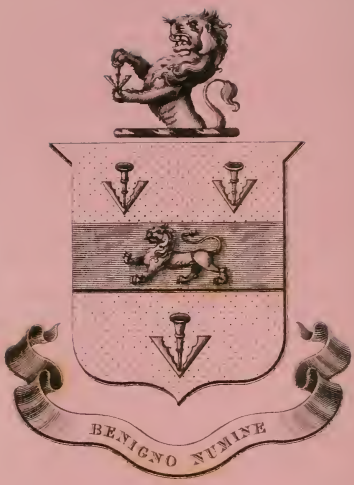

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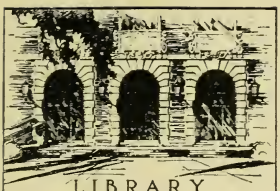

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MICHAEL,

THE MARRIED MAN;

OR,

THE SEQUEL TO

THE HISTORY OF

MICHAEL KEMP.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"SHADES OF CHARACTER," "HISTORY OF MICHAEL KEMP,"
&c. &c.

PART I.

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MICHAEL,

THE MARRIED MAN.

It was about four years after the marriage of Stephen and Fanny, that I called to inquire after my old friends at the Brow. Betty Smith was going on in the quiet performance of the duties of her station, and continually saying, "His goodness and his mercy hath followed me all my days;" and her master was sensible of her worth; still there was a vacuum in his evening hour, and he was often found wandering to the fire-side at the mill, and leaving his ample house to Betty Smith and his other servants. In the summer he saw his family, but, as the winter drew on, there was a loneliness about his dwelling, and he found the visits of his little nephew a most delightful solace. The reader is well acquainted with Fanny's devoted attachment to her brother, and will not be displeased to hear that this attachment increased as her own views opened, and the warm-hearted young crea-

ture, when Mr. Lascelles said, "Name this child," had forgotten that it was not the mother's place, and exclaimed, "O! *Michael*, Sir." The good man caught the mother's meaning, and the prayer of the parent and the pastor ascended together to the throne of grace. The little creature won daily on his uncle's affections; first, baby softness, and tenderness mixed with a sort of dependance; then the opening of his intelligence, and the endearment of infancy, and as soon as he could walk he was found clinging to his uncle's side, and lingering to go home with him.

It was shortly after his third birth-day, when a younger infant, a little sister, occupied the attention of his mother, that he was missing, to their great alarm. Michael called in as usual, and finding Fanny in deep distress, (for she greatly feared the mill-stream,) he intreated her to compose herself, and returned home, convinced in his own mind that he should find the little wanderer at the Brow, and so indeed he did. Betty Smith met him at the door, "Dear me, Sir, if that bit of a baby b'aint come all alone," and as he entered the room, after sending Betty down to let Fanny know the child was safe, he found him sitting very quietly on his little stool, taking the stones out of his shoes. "Come,

uncle," said the little truant, "sit down by Michael." After taking him on his knee, and stroking his head fondly, his uncle looked gravely at him; "You have made your mother cry, Michael, she had lost you, my boy,"—"go home," said the child, and he slipped from his uncle's knee and put his little hat upon his head; "you *shall* go home," and he took him in his arms and carried him to the mill. I need not tell the greeting; mothers can easily conceive it, and those who are not mothers may dispense with it. "We must contrive some means," said Michael, "to stop this runaway." "I am afraid that will not be easily done," said Fanny, "for he is too young to feel the sin of breaking his word, we must watch him carefully," added she. It was long after this event, that Fanny continued to say, when he went to the door, "Not to the Brow, my love, not to uncle Kemp's." "O no, no, no," was the constant reply.

In the circle of human pleasures, perhaps none are so pure and delightful as those of which infancy forms a part. Life is new, and the untried traveller has neither learnt to imitate the language of others, nor to court their approbation; all is original, all is natural and various; we are too apt to injure this by giving patterns and ex-

amples, whereas, if we were to leave the character to develop, only weeding out sin, and curbing excess, we should at least secure more simplicity.

It may be observed that there are characters who continue originals. This is true, but it will be found that some defect in their character keeps them so, a will which cannot be subjugated, or a self-satisfaction which is proof against remonstrance——But I am wandering. Forgive me, reader——As Michael walked back to the Brow, he met a little creature not more than seven years old, with a large bundle of wood upon his head going towards home. "Your name is Thomas Brown?" "Yes, Sir." "You have been to my hedge, and your father desired you to say that you gathered the wood from the ground." The boy looked astonished.—"There now, put down that wood, it is not yours, it is mine! and tell your father I wish to speak with him." He carried home the bundle of wood, and was met by Betty in the passage. "Dear me, Sir, I'm sure you are very good, but Leonard has brought me in my sticks." "*I* did not gather these sticks, Betty; look ye here, this is green wood." Betty looking at it, "Dear me, yes, and if here baint some young quick too; why where could

ye get *this, Sir?*" "I met Thomas Brown carrying it home." "What, Sir! *that child?*" "Yes, Betty." "*I* can't see, Sir, how he could gather them, the prickles be so sharp." "Why, Betty, you see his father works near some of my fields, and half his time is employed in gathering wood and putting it in a particular corner till the night, and then the boy is sent out as if he went to gather sticks; when, in fact, he is only sent to pick up what the father has been cutting." "That is a bad plan, Sir, that do train them for the gallows." "Yes, Betty, and it is less excusable in this parish, because so much care is taken to provide all that is necessary." "To be sure, Sir, there is; it has often been a wonderment to me, the thought and the care that Mr. Lascelles do take, and yet he do never seem satisfied with himself." "No, he grows in humility, and I have no doubt he has such increasing views of man's depravity, and the perfection of Jesus, that after the saying of a good man, he feels poorer! all our righteousness, and all our riches, must be in *Him*. It is a good thing, Betty, not only for ourselves, but for those with whom we stand connected, when experience shows us our just proportion. I know not well what I shall do with this man when

he comes." *(Betty)* "You must frighten him a little, Sir; I should pick out the young quick, in particular."

Brown came up, and taking off his hat, "I heard, Sir, as you had a wish to speak wi' me." "Step in Brown; it is two months since I planted an entire new quick hedge on the western side of the field that joins your master's, and you see what lies on this table. I wish to ask you, Brown, if this is doing as you would be done by? If I were to dig up your potatoes and boil them for my dinner"——"Aye, Sir, you'll never do *that*, I'm sure—you are too good for that; besides, Sir, you don't want potatoes, and *I do* want wood—the wages are so low, and we have had a deal of sickness." "If wages are low, Brown, bread is low, and as for your sickness, that is always provided for in this parish—you have generally physic and food during the whole time, and a very fair allowance." "To be sure, Sir, good night, Sir." "No, Brown, not so fast, I must have some promise from you not to be so bad a neighbour in future." *(Brown)* "Dear Sir, how can you tell as *I* took it out of your hedge?" "I leave *that* with your own conscience, Brown; from whatever hedge it was taken, you have done very wrong, and it will be easy for me to de-

tect you directly by a walk to my field; it is unpardonable in this parish, and shows an innate love of mischief. I hope you feel that it is wrong, you may depend upon it I shall not pass by another offence of this kind." Brown was glad to escape, and Betty said, "Dear me, Sir, you should have given him a good rally, he won't mind that at all. Did you hear as the shopkeepers were selling off at prime cost?" "Are they going to quit then?" "Why, sir, they've had a fortune left 'em; a kind of a miserly uncle as hav'nt allowed himself bread and cheese, used often to come and dine there, and to have the best as the shop did afford, and he was so perticler pleased with the kind entertainment as they did give him, that he have left 'em every thing that he had, and they do say as neighbour Shouldam will ride in his carriage." "And do you think, Betty, he will be happier than he is now?" "Oh, dear no, Sir, I'm sure Jenny Shouldam will miss the gossip sadly."

Joseph Kemp, who continued the same character, was not confided in by his brother, who clearly saw that he was one of those persons who must always be directed. He was grieved at this, for he would gladly have provided for Joe, but he was in perpetual danger of making some foolish mis-

take. In our former visits to the neighbourhood of the Brow Farm, it may be remembered that there was a family who were very anxious to become acquainted with Michael, and to form some lasting connexion, this had only slept. It was about this time that Michael was honoured with a visit from the brother of Miss Jennings. Michael was writing when he walked into the house, and said, he should be glad to speak with him. Betty did not think that Mr. Jennings could have any thing of consequence to say to her master, so she continued stirring her starch, without attempting to quit the apartment. "I should be glad to speak with you *alone*, Sir," said Mr. Jennings; and they walked together to the small back parlour. "I called, Sir, to ask what you meant to do for Mr. Joseph?" "For Joseph!" "There is a kindness between him and my sister, and I thought perhaps you would give up part of the farm to him." "No, indeed, Mr. Jennings, I have no such design; my brother is likely to be a working man all his life, and the sooner your sister knows this, the better; and I think, Mr. Jennings, if you wish well to your sister, you should forbid the visits of Joseph Kemp." Mr. Jennings was surprised, he thought it was

a very good joint for Mr. Joseph, and he wondered his brother could not see it. He withdrew, astonished at Mr. Kemp's coolness and decision.

Michael thought he would send Joe home again for a short season, that he might forget the lady, and that she might recover her liberty, and bestow her hand more suitably. But the mother was not to be so baffled; she called on Mr. Michael, and said, "She was quite sorry to find Mr. Joseph was not likely to go into business, and that it was an old attachment, that she thought it would go hard with her daughter, and that she feared her good man would never consent that her Louisa should marry a working man." Michael Kemp surprised Mrs. Jennings by the following reply, "I think, Ma'am, Mr. Jennings is perfectly in the right, my brother Joseph is a working boy, his father is a weekly labourer at a nursery garden. I consider myself as Mrs. Finch's steward; if I succeed in business, I may perhaps have the great consolation of assisting my parents, when they can no longer provide for themselves; I have several brothers and sisters who have quite as just claims on me as Joseph; but even of these I shall not think, till by industry and frugality I may be able to provide for

my father and mother." "Well, Mr. Kemp, I must needs say you are losing a good chance; I can't tell if you know my Louisa, she has had the best of educations, and would have made your brother as genteel a wife, as any man would desire to look upon. And she is so religious too, I think within the last twelvemonth she have giv'd away more money than ever I did in all my life, and yet you see she is quite elegant." Michael said, "he had not the honour of knowing Miss Jennings." "What, Mr. Kemp, did you never see my Louisa at church!!" "I have no doubt, Madam, that I may have seen Miss Jennings, but I believe you have more daughters than one." "Oh yes, certainly, there's my Amelia Jane, and Eleanora Frances, and there's Antoinette, as we christened after the Queen of France; I often say I hope the poor girl will never be guillotined." Michael gravely replied, "he hoped not." "Talking of that guillotine, Sir, I have heard it as a remarkable quick death, do you know whether that's true, Sir?" "No, really Madam, but I should suppose the report is likely to be so." Mrs. Jennings was delighted at drawing Mr. Kemp into conversation even on the guillotine; and so she continued facetiously, "By what I could see on't, for a

man once came to our house with a pattern, and says I to my husband, my little Tiny shall see, (for that's what we call Antoinette,) my little Tiny shall see how her namesake had her head cut off. So I puts my hand in my pocket, and I gives the man twopence, and I called all my children about me, and my Harry, you know him, Sir, *(Michael bowed,)* he's as 'cute a lad as ye shall see in a summer's day: why, says he, mother, why its just for all the world like a mouse trap! and when I came to look on it again, why, says I, boy, so it is! and his father said, let our Harry alone, he will do in the world."

Poor Michael's patience was almost exhausted, Mrs. Jennings began to perceive it, but she was not willing to end the matter quite so quickly, so she said, "I hope your mother is quite well, Sir." "I hope she is, Madam; I have not heard for some time past———" "A very handsome woman, Mrs. Kemp, I said to my husband, when I saw her at church, says I, John, that Mrs. Kemp must have been a beauty in her young days! but as I was saying, Mr. Kemp, perhaps if you was to call now and then at our house and take a friendly cup of tea, and smoke a pipe with my husband, and Mr. Joseph was to come in you know, my husband

may get used to him; now that's a mighty particular thing in him, I forgot to tell you that he takes a strange fancy to a thing when he's used to it, so as I was a saying ——" Michael now determined to cut short this harangue, "I should think myself, Madam, unworthy the confidence of any person, if I were capable of endeavouring, by artifice, to persuade them to that, which, in my own judgment, I thought unsuitable; my brother, Madam, has no right to expect any woman for his wife above the rank of an honest, decent maid servant ——" "Oh dear, Mr. Kemp, you are so humble!" Michael shook his head: "I hope, Madam, your daughters will be better provided for, and that I shall never forfeit my title to that honesty which gained me the good opinion of my late master. There are so many persons in this parish who remember me a poor stable boy, that I am sure it would be thought a sad disgrace for your daughter, Mrs. Jennings, to throw away her fine education on my brother ——" "Well, I'm sorry for the young folks, however," said this persevering mother. At this moment in came Joseph, and when he saw Mrs. J. he looked more silly than usual, hoped she was well, and all the family was well. Quite well, and she thanked him. "And

won't you have nothing to take?" said Joseph. "Why, I shouldn't mind if I did have a little fresh beer, or a drop of ginger wine." "I can offer you a little elder wine," said Michael, "but we have no ginger." "Ah, that's what I often say, there's none in this country as knows how to make ginger wine but *me*, and *you* know its very good, Mr. Joseph." "I never tasted any thing pleasanter; I should think, brother, as Betty Smith could make some." "I should be quite happy to show Betty how to make it, Mr. Kemp, and my Louisa shall write out the receipt, Mr. Joseph." Mr. Joseph smiled, but Michael was so absolutely disgusted with this incorrect mother, that he remained obstinately silent, until impenetrable as she *was*, she began to feel her departure as the most proper step. Joseph, making an excuse from the steepness of the road, insisted on giving her his arm down the hill. Michael coldly bade her good morning, and when Joseph returned, said, "I fear you have acted imprudently."

In thus repelling the hopes of Mrs. Jennings, Michael had only put back, what he would never have encouraged under any circumstances. To see Joseph settled in the midst of a weak and worldly family, would, he knew, be certain ruin. To give *him* a genteel wife, whose head was already full of *ideas* far beyond

his station, would have been confirming all his foolish notions, and then to place him among those, who were without God in the world, him whose hopes were already so bounded, was in Michael's opinion, putting him out of the way. He was hesitating what he should say next, when Joseph began, for Joe had not replied to his last speech, "Brother, brother, I hope you have no objections to Miss Jennings, they have all been so kind to me, I'm sure I never *could* have thought as Miss Jennings had such a regard for me: she told me the last Friday as ever was, that she would rather live with me in a cottage, than have a lord: but I hope, brother, you won't mention it." "No indeed, Joseph, I should not mention any thing so silly; I do not think Miss Jennings knows what it is to live in a cottage with a day labourer." Joseph looked hurt and disappointed:— Michael did not wish to wound him, but he was desirous to put him in his right place, and he added these few words, "It seems, Joseph, that Miss J. is a forward young lady, her brother is a good-natured, silly young man, and her mother so foolishly indulgent as to act in opposition to her husband's will and wishes." Joseph was going on, "Indeed, brother, I don't know as Mr. Jennings is an enemy of mine." "I never supposed he was, Joseph.

I think he appears to be a man who would not wish his daughter to leave home without the prospect of a maintenance." Joseph began at length to comprehend that his brother had no idea of taking him into partnership, and he walked sullenly away.

Betty Smith saw that her master was grieved about something, and she had a method of looking at him with sympathy, without uttering a word; but that look had so much of feeling, that it often drew Michael into confidence and disclosure. When Michael mentioned the occasion of these visits from the Jennings', she shook her head, "Ah, Sir, they make a great show, but there's more cry than wool. I have heard from them as knows, that young Mr. J. will spend a pound note at the public houses most market days, and that old Mr. Jennings have spent a deal of foolish money on that new house. Do you know, Sir, as those Miss Jennings's have got a morning room, and they come in, in their morning dresses, and have got little stools to put their feet on, and a neighbour told me, it was quite a beautiful sight to see the four Miss Jennings's in that apartment: they have pink curtains tied up in knots of ribbon, and all their grandmamma's china to imitate Mrs. Lascelles." "Oh, Betty, it is very foolish," said Mi-

chael, for he had not patience to listen to it." "No, Sir, they've got an eye to Mr. Joseph coming in half partner with you, and I heard it said, I don't know how true it is, that they thought to make quite a pretty thing of the Brow." The patience of Michael was now quite exhausted, and he said, "I really think the best thing I can do will be to send Joe home." "I think so, Sir," said Betty, "for that Richard Moss have done Mr. Joseph no good." Michael retired to his apartment, and poured out his heart in prayer before God, for counsel and direction. It was there he renewed his strength for his journey.

It is worthy the observation of any person, who desires to profit by the providences of God, to note the small links in the great chain. Michael had settled in his own mind that Joseph should return to P——, but he had many reasons which deterred him from doing any thing rashly: he did not wish to hurt Joe's feelings, and still less did he wish to disappoint the hopes of his dear father and mother; and how to return this unpromising young man was the difficulty. It was not that Michael was unwilling to bear with him, but he really feared, that surrounded as he appeared to be by temptation, he would fall into some gross imprudence, and bring his

parents' grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. He remained in this uneasy state the whole of the following day, watching this overgrown child; at last he determined to go and consult Fanny. Stephen met him at the door of his little dwelling, and seeing that more than usual care hung on his brow, asked if he were well? "Quite well, but I want to chat with Fanny," and he related all that had passed. "Oh," said Fanny, "this is no news to us, last night, Joe the Miller, when he came in to settle the account, said, there's rare news in the village, Ma'am, there's to be a grand wedding soon, not that 'twas much news to me, for I have seen it coming on many a day. I wondered at the man's talkativeness, and was just going to say, we had nothing to do with it, when Stephen said, why what's all this to us, Joseph? Joseph said, it *was* to us, it was in our family, that both my brothers were going to be married to two of the Miss Jennings's, that Joe was to have Miss Louisa, and that Master chose the youngest and the prettiest, Miss Antinetty."

Michael could not help smiling, and Fanny, who stood by him, patted his shoulder, and said, "my steady brother and Miss Antoinette!" "Come, Sir," said Stephen, "do sit down: can I do any thing?" Michael

sighed heavily, "I am sure I do not know what to do, these foolish people seem to court their own ruin." Stephen said, "he understood that Joe was learning to play the flute, and that they looked on him as very clever at Sizors." "Oh, dear me," said Michael, and Fanny laughed. At this moment Joe came in, bringing a letter from P———. "Come, sit down, sit down all of you," said Fanny, "and let us hear it." There was a great rattling at the door, "Dear Joe, do open the door, that's my wild boy," and the moment the door was opened, he darted across to Michael, and the eye of his fond relation looked down on him with love. The letter was as follows:

"Dear Children,

"Blessing and peace rest upon you. You must have thought it long since you heard from us: thank God we are all well, and we are wanting news of you. I should not have written to you just now, but at the desire of our master. You know how fond he is of your father; he is very desirous to do us any good, and he wants a hand in the conservatory that should be just under your father, and he says he thinks no one would do for the place as well as Joe. Now remember, my dear

Michael, I should be exceedingly sorry to hinder you in your business, but a nurseryman's is such a good trade; and I thought if our poor dear Joe could get to be promoted, if he would like to come and could conduct himself steadily. (Every eye was bent on Joe while this passage was reading, but he stood staring out of the window, thinking of Miss Jennings.) Much allowance was to be made for his weak mind. He had lost, as he thought, promotion, all his hopes seemed to be disappointed. He and Miss Jennings had planned to live very comfortably at the Brow. They did not mean to displace Mr. Michael—oh no! they thought they should add to his comfort. It must be very dull for him with that Betty Smith, and then Mrs. Jennings thought when once Miss Louisa was settled, and Mr. Michael began to know the family, her little Tiny would be sure to make her way.

Thus do worldly people plan, and God sometimes permits their plans to take effect, and they commend themselves for their own ingenuity, till they discover that the happiness they sought, is not happiness; and their disappointed expectations are never traced to their true source, and oh, how often do we find such persons

charging God foolishly, whereas they are eating the fruit of their own way, and tasting that bitterness which unblessed schemes are sure to entail on artful, worldly minded persons. But here in a case of this sort, where the children of God would have been involved in the same ruin, He who ordereth the steps of the good man, He who keepeth his children as the apple of his eye, He who sitteth in the heavens, laughed them to scorn, and his mercy, not only for eternity but for time, followeth his people from generation to generation. Reader, pardon this digression.

The remainder of Mrs. Kemp's letter contained only local intelligence which would interest none who are unacquainted with P——. Joe would have given something to have heard the remainder, for he concluded that it contained some censure of his conduct, and some doubt of his prudence. Had Michael thought this, not a word would have been kept from him, but he put it in his pocket, and his head was full of contrivances for Joe's return to P——, and his heart swelled with gratitude to God who had made his way plain. As they walked back to the farm together, Michael observed, " I think this opening quite pro-

vidential, Joseph." Joseph made no reply. "I think," said he, in continuation, "this opening is quite the thing for you." "Do you, brother?" said Joe, "poor Miss Jennings have got such a regard for me, that I'm afraid she won't like it." "*That* is very probable," said Michael, "but her father will be very well satisfied, that she should escape poverty; for I do not think, Joseph, that you are capable of maintaining a wife at present; you have not sufficient industry. But there is no doubt, by application to your business, you may do something." This was holding out a rational hope, and though Michael thought the connexion by no means desirable, he left this impression on Joseph's mind, that industry in his business might promote his wishes. He however knew enough of the human heart, to feel sure Mrs. Jennings and her daughter would not permit the matter to drop so very quietly, and he greatly feared correspondence, and some foolish result: he therefore determined to call on old Mr. Jennings, and request half an hour's conversation.

There was a favourite walk in the Brow Farm Garden which Michael always took when his heart was oppressed; it was skirted by a double row of filbert trees, and here did he walk and pray for direc-

tion. One point of this young man's fear was, that he might act in his own spirit, while outwardly he appeared to be seeking the good of others. Oh, how did he daily discover the windings and intricacies of his own bosom, and how frequently would he feel the truth of that scripture; "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," and this too, at the very moment when he was admired and looked up to by those who knew him most intimately; and in this sense the approbation of his fellow-creatures was really distressing to him. Thus it will ever be with the renewed mind; the clearer the view of heavenly purity and holiness is displayed in Jesus, the deeper will be the abhorrence of the slightest pollution. In his nut walk Michael prayed, that through the whole of this business he might walk by the light of divine counsel. After this, he went out to visit some of the poor who were sick in his neighbourhood, and he suffered the affair to cool two or three days. In the mean time Joseph was getting ready, and his changing mind was finding advantages in his home residence: they certainly were not consolations of a superior kind, but as they were consolations to Joe, and reconciled him in some degree for the loss of his visits to Sizors,

we will just mention it, that the reader may know the full worth of Joe's tender attachment. He thought, 'Well now, I'm to be a sort of head man, I shall put down my name to the Bowling Green, and if my father makes any objections, I shall say to him just as Mr. H. Jennings says to his father, "Sir, the thing is done." Oh, I remember seeing Mr. Jennings rub his hands and clap them when he said that! and the old man had not a word to say for himself.'

It may be remembered, that there was a good old Christian of the name of Beal, who was truly an honour to religion. Meekness and resignation had marked her progress through life. The death of her husband had been a trial which put her firmest principles to a severe test, but he whom she had trusted, was faithful; and she counted it worthy of all honour that she was called to resign, though it was resigning ALL; and she did it in that spirit of meekness, which calls forth the feelings of every one capable of appreciating the beauties of a renewed mind. But Mr. Lascelles, in his frequent visits to her, felt such an increasing regard, and saw so clearly the influence of absolute seclusion at her time of life, when age wants the care of childhood, that he

determined to find some person to attend her: but this was more easily proposed than accomplished, and when Margaret heard of it, she shook her head, and replied, "I'm sure, Sir, you are very kind and good, I'm perfectly sensible of that, but I'm really afraid as it would be a difficult matter to suit me. I have always been used to live so very clean, and my poor husband was such delightsome company, that it is no easy matter to fill up his place. I have a sister who is in great weakness, she has a daughter coming seventeen in August, who has never been out. While her father was alive they wanted for nothing, but he died last year of the scarlet fever; how they have maintained themselves since I can't say. My niece is a good girl, and I should be very glad to have her here, but you know, Sir, this is not a place in which she could earn much, she has been bred to the mantua making, and I should be sorry to bring her here to her hurt." "Well, you can only ask her, and if you find she makes any hesitation, leave it." This conversation had passed between Margaret and Mr. Lascelles some months since, and he saw in the same pew on Easter Sunday a very decent looking woman sitting by Margaret, and a young girl, apparently the age of her niece, and

he thought to himself, I do hope the poor old woman has succeeded. Such was the case, Mary Humphries and her daughter were indeed arrived, and on the following morning, when Mr. Lascelles called to see Margaret, he found them sitting at their work-table, in all the enjoyment of decent life. Esther Humphries had obtained a little work, and was performing with her accustomed neatness, the orders with which some neighbours had favoured her. Mr. Lascelles was very much pleased with the conversation of the mother, and the silent industry of the daughter.

There is no situation, however humble, that entirely excludes enjoyment; the pursuit of the silent duties of life, when those duties are under the Divine blessing, brings pleasure and satisfaction in the performance. We must be careful not to attribute the thorny path, exclusively to God, but remember; "The transgressors make paths for themselves, and walk in the light of their own guilt, and sin usually makes this a painful path; whereas the path of the righteous is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The husband had been coachman in a great family, and Esther was his only child; she used to linger about the coach-house and stables, while

the fond father would listen to her entreaties, and let her ride with him on the coach-box, till he drew near the door of the mansion: when some of the good-natured servants would carefully place the little Esther on firm ground. This indulgence had been granted so often, that it was at last noticed by the young ladies of the family, and when Esther, who was in her sixth year, after one of her rides was returning to her mother, she was met by the youngest daughter, who putting her hand on the infant's head, said, "Well, little one, have you had a ride?" Esther's pleading face was covered with blushes, as she replied, "Yes, Ma'am." She was that sort of child, whom we sometimes see, without any pretensions to beauty, yet with such a stamp of artlessness, and all the innocence of infancy so fresh upon her, that she made her way immediately, and the whole conversation during the morning ride turned upon Esther, and her fond father: it was settled among themselves, that if her parents would consent, she should form one of a little school newly established, where she would not only learn to read, work, and write, but be trained for future life, according to the natural inclination of her mind. Esther had a most useful active

mother, who had recommended herself by kindness in nursing, and performing other offices for her neighbours; the mistress of the school had among others shared her friendly attentions. Now though we are not about to prove, that gratitude is a prevailing principle; yet we have observed, that those who water shall be watered again, and these attentions on the part of Mary Humphries, had prepared the schoolmistress to take peculiar interest in the improvement of her daughter. The continuance of the child at school, during a series of years, had so completed her education as a work woman, that she executed every thing she undertook with uncommon neatness and ability. Never was a doll dressed so prettily as Esther's, every little slip was turned to some use by the assistance of her needle, and so well done, that it at length attracted the attention of her young mistresses, and it was settled that she should be apprenticed to a mantua-maker: not indeed one of the fashionables, but a neat orderly woman in the neighbourhood, whom they were accustomed to employ. She acquired from this instructress the art of fitting her young ladies, and was continually employed by them till circumstances removed them;

and this happened about the time Margaret Beal sent for her sister.

Before Joseph's departure for his father's dwelling, Michael determined to call on Mr. Jennings, and as he drew near Sizors, Miss Jennings perceived him; she was walking under the shade of her parasol, round a neat little garden in front of the house, in her small lace cap, and certainly had she appeared suitably to the station assigned her by providence, we must have owned she was a fine looking young woman. As it was, we could not help being sorry that the father and the mother laboured early and late to provide for the idleness and vanity of their numerous family. At Mrs. Finch's, Jemima's eye was on every part of the establishment; but *here*, to have known the price of butter, or how many cheeses were made in a week, would have been deemed a vulgarity to which they could not stoop.

Michael bowed very coolly as he passed the young lady, and inquired of a dirty, slavish servant, if her master was at home? The girl said, "Yes," and Miss Jennings turning her steps towards the house, was about to lead him to her father. He however declined this favour, and said he would wait, as his business was private. The

farmer soon came out: he was a rough, honest, good looking man, of a very firm temper, not clever, though he understood his business, and applied to it closely. He thought his wife greatly mistaken in her mode of bringing up her daughters, yet was always silenced by, "Leave the girls to me, Mr. Jennings, you mind your boys." So it was, "Well, well," and a shrug, and the matter was settled.

Michael introduced his business with proposing a walk, that they might converse privately, Mr. Jennings secretly rejoicing in the hope of a respectable establishment for one of his daughters, readily accompanied him, and with the cheerfulness of a man who anticipates nothing but pleasure, began to joke with him on the times, how that they farmers should soon ride in their carriages. Michael smiled, and said, "the times had been good, and no doubt many of them had made fortunes, that it bore hardest on young beginners: my business, Sir," said he, "is to inform you, that I understand my thoughtless brother, Joseph, has been endeavouring to recommend himself in your family, not considering the distinction that is to be made between the daughters of a substantial farmer, and the son of a labouring man: and I think it right, Sir,

to put you on your guard, by informing you that Joseph Kemp has literally nothing but day labour to depend on. For myself, Sir, I live honestly, but by the time I have paid Mrs. Finch's annuity, provided for Richard Moss, and assisted my own family at home, I have really nothing to spare for Joseph."

Curiosity was a very active principle in the mind of Mr. Jennings. By some means he had seen Farmer Moss's will, but never perceived any thing of an annuity for Mrs. Finch; and he thought this speech of Mr. Kemp's was nothing more than a flourish; for he could not conceive it possible that any one should act as Michael had really acted: but he determined this should not pass. "Annuity, Mr. Kemp! annuity! I never saw any thing of that sort in Farmer Moss's will!" "No, Sir," said Michael, "it was an omission, which, had I known the contents of the will before my master's death, I should certainly have urged him to supply; but, as it is, the affair is arranged, and I have the happiness of convincing Mrs. Finch of my duty, and unwillingness to injure her." "Why, Mr. Kemp, do you pay Mrs. Finch an annuity of your own good will in these hard times? A young man like you just beginning the

world! Now, begging your pardon, I think this a very foolish business. Why, Mrs. Finch, is, as you may say, a rich woman; and her son and daughter are provided for." Michael made no reply to this part of Mr. Jennings's speech, but continued to say, "he thought it probable Joseph would write to Miss Jennings," and he delivered his conscience in warning him against a connexion which would be every way disadvantageous. He concluded by saying, "that Joseph was a good-natured lad, but had no head for business, and that if raised in life to conduct a farm, he would infallibly involve himself from want of ability." He wished Mr. Jennings a good morning, and was going, when the good man continued, "One word with you, Mr. Kemp, if you will give your brother £100, I will give him £400 with my daughter." "Really, Sir, it is not in my power to do this, and I tell you sincerely, that I believe my brother totally incapable of managing money, and that were Miss Jennings a sister of mine, I should close my doors against Joseph Kemp." "Very extraordinary, very extraordinary!" said Mr. Jennings, "you seem quite your brother's enemy." "No, indeed, Sir, but far be it from me in order to promote my family to involve yours."

"And so, Mr. Kemp, you really *do* pay Mrs. Finch an annuity?" "I really *do*, Sir. If you have any doubts on the subject, I am certain Mrs. Finch would satisfy you. Good morning, Sir." Mr. Jennings walked in. Very uncommon man that, uncommon honest, 'twould be a fool's head business indeed to marry my girl to a labourer: well, now I think on't, I always thought *that* Joseph Kemp a silly looking fellow. I said to my girl only Tuesday last, as he seemed to hold the flute uncommon stupid. No, says I, Louisa, he will never be up to that; but the girl has taken a strange fancy to him. A labourer! no, that would be a story to tell, Miss Louisa Jennings to Joseph Kemp labourer!

Thus Mr. Jennings was reconciled, as many people in life are reconciled. The event *could* not take place, and he began to perceive that it was best it *should* not. Just as Mr. Kemp quitted Sizors, Miss Antoinette returned from a walk, but she could make nothing of this meeting. Michael was too full of the business he had been upon, and if he saw her, he did not distinguish which of the ladies it was. She came home, primed with intelligence of a new shop in the village, or rather a new mantua-maker, and the whole store of her wit was employed in

ridiculing Miss Esther Humphries. "We shall never be at a loss for fashions," said this flippant young lady, "though I'm afraid they will be rather of the quaker kind." "Dear me," said Louisa, "how I should like to go and see her. I could take her an old gown to make; I should rejoice in puzzling her imagination by inquiries after the latest fashions." So these very amiable young ladies sallied out together.

Esther had procured a small board, signifying her name and employment. It was neatly done, and placed just over the window of her aunt's cottage. "Well, Margaret Beal," said Miss Jennings, "we are honoured indeed, your house will become the resort of all the fashionable people." And this young lady entered the door in a spirit of ridicule, but the power of good manners and good sense is irresistible. Esther rose to get them seats, and begged to be informed what they would wish to have. These voluble young ladies began to look doubtfully on each other. At last Miss Jennings requested she might see some of the newest millinery. "Ladies," said Esther, with becoming modesty, "I only make gowns to your own patterns. I could show you some things belonging to another person,

when they are finished." "Pray how long have you been established here, Miss Humphries?" "Only three weeks, Ma'am." "I should fear you would find business a poor thing here." "Indeed, Ma'am, I have had as much as I could do ever since I arrived. Mrs. Lascelles is very kind, and I have been working for Mrs. Meredith at the mill." Miss Jennings bit her lips to avoid a smile, and she pronounced the word "Indeed" with a very firm tone.

Things were in this quiet state when Margaret Beal came in; she had been weeding her garden, and bade the young ladies a cordial good morning, hoped their mother was well, said it was fine weather for the harvest, and inquired after farming business, of which they confessed themselves completely ignorant. Margaret, whose simplicity took the short road to mortification, while she really had no intention to mortify them, as they professed ignorance of one thing, and ignorance of another, said, "Now that's a pity!" She had repeated this several times, when Miss Jennings asked her, "What was a pity?" "Why, my dear, that you should know nothing. I wonder your mother don't teach you! It will be strangely awkward for you, please God, you should ever have a house of your own, and married to some

working man." Miss Jennings could scarcely contain her displeasure, but Margaret did not see it. "She is a kind mother, dears, she was always a bustling body, but its time now for you to guide the house, and for her to sit down, and consider her latter end. Let's see how many are there of ye?" And she began to enumerate. "That's a fine saying of the psalmist, 'Like as the arrows in the hand of the giant, even so are the young children.' That is, ye see dears, the giant sends one arrow to one place, and another to another, all designed for various purposes: so, my dear girls, you may all do different things; one might sweep the house, another might make the butter, and if any of you have a hand at your needle, you could make and mend your father's shirts." This was hardly to be borne, and they were anxious to end it, when Esther asked, "if they had any commands for *her?*" They said "No, that unless they could *see* some patterns, it was impossible to fix." Esther curtsied, and the ladies withdrew.

They had scarcely left the garden before they met Mr. Lascelles, with his youngest little girl hanging on his arm. "So, Miss Jennings, you have been to see

that good creature, Margaret Beal?" The condescensions of Mr. Lascelles were never quite understood by Miss J. She always felt a disposition to rise when this excellent man descended; but he was a person of very keen susceptibility, and understood every motion of every mind. Miss Jennings said, "No, Sir, we have been to her niece the mantua-maker." Mr. Lascelles replied, "I am glad of it; I suppose your employments at home are pretty numerous, so that you have not leisure to work much for yourselves; and as my wife informs me, this good girl is an acquisition in the village, you may find her very useful, and she may be a nice companion for you, she has read a great deal I find, and her good mother is *so* respectable." There was nothing to be said, and the Miss Jennings's escaped.

"Poor, vain young creatures," said Mary Humphries, "I am sorry for them, they are neither like gentry nor farmers' daughters." "Dear mother," replied Esther, "I thought they were very agreeable young ladies." "Well, my dear, that's a very christian spirit of yours, and I wish to my heart I could learn of you in that respect, for I never hear you speak evil of any one." Margaret Beal smiled

as she walked about her little dwelling, and whispered something softly to herself. "What is my aunt smiling at," said Esther. "Never do you mind, dear." "Come, sister," said Mary Humphries, "tell us what you be saying." "Why, if you *will* have it, Mary, I was saying, that neither you nor Esther, had hit the right nail on the head: if you had finished your speech, you had been pretty near the truth, if you had said, they were not like what farmers' daughters *should be;* but they are exactly like what farmers' daughters *are*, and what they will be, till squires come to live in their own houses. There's that fine hall, with the burning of Troy town over the mantel-piece, with the blue and pink panes of glass all along the windows, and ever so many of the squire's grand relations hanging round the room. Why, its just for all the world like squires' daughters sitting down in their own house, and as they pays the rent, they can't fancy but 'tis their own. Well, there they are, nice fine grown girls—have been used to ride, ever since they could run alone; and what's so natural, but that when the father sees them grow up, he should mount them on the finest horses in his stable; and its been the talk for many years, what genteel figures they cut on horseback. Well, then, the next

thought is, who knows but they may make their fortunes. And then, the mother, poor thing, told me one day, 'twould be a pity to spoil her Tiny's hand with work; for, when the great lord came there, he noted Tiny's pretty hand and arm. So the father is proud of their riding, and the mother is proud of their pretty white hands, and there isn't a race round the country, but they are to be seen; and its the talk for a week after, what one said, and another said. All this is very bad for those girls, though its very natural." "But I thought, aunt, the young ladies seemed to come very regularly to church." "Ah, my dear, so I thought, too, and seemed to behave decent; though Betty Smith tells me, that there's been a deep trap laid there, to catch her master." "Dear me, aunt, how shocking! Do you believe that? Do you think any body would go to church, for such a wicked purpose as that?" "My dear, I don't know; I should be sorry to judge any body wrong; I only tell you what poor Betty said, and she is not given to evil surmises; her heart has been very heavy about it, since she heard her master say, about a fortnight ago, that he was pleased to see the Miss Jennings's more attentive at church than they used to be." "Mr. Kemp is a good man, I suppose, aunt?"

"No doubt, my dear, an uncommon good young man; you may say, that *his* religion has been profitable for the life that now is, and for that also which is to come." Here Margaret Beal related all she knew of Michael; and dwelt more particularly on the services he had rendered his late master.—"Ah, that's what I have often told you, Esther," said her mother, "to drop a word now and then: though sown in weakness, it may be attended with a blessing." "My dear mother! I am so afraid of getting to be a talker; there's nothing I have such a dread of as hypocrisy." "My dear, that's one of the snares of the father of lies; and so, for fear of hypocrisy, you haven't a word to say for your good God, who has brought you from darkness to light." "Well," said Margaret, "let her alone, my dear; I think Esther will shew forth God's praise by her life, even though her lips should be silent."—"Thank you, my dear aunt, you have always been hopeful about your poor Esther, and thought well of her, with all her faults. I can only love you, and pray to God to bless you, and *that* I do every day."—"Dear, good girl," said her aunt; "I am very glad, Hetty, that you never took to ride about the country." "I never had an opportunity, aunt.

I dare say I should have liked it, if I had." —" No doubt, child," said her mother; " as face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man."

We will leave these good people, and follow the Miss Jennings's to their dwelling. They had talked a little by the way, and but little; for the sight of Mr. Lascelles —his cool, yet happy method, of putting folly in its place, without leaving one painful impression by a harsh word;—the love of the soul, which bore down every angry feeling against lightness and folly, beamed through his eye, even while his voice censured;—all this made its impression; and the Miss Jennings's were sobered, they knew not how: yet, no sooner did they enter the paternal abode, than they began. Their sisters were full of enquiries. " Well; and what says the new lady of the mode?" " Oh, very humble—very much obliged—very willing to execute all our commands." "No doubt." Their father was sitting by the fire-side, his temper somewhat ruffled by the disappointment of the morning—some bad success in the sale of his cheese—low price of corn—and the failure of his factor;—and, as he saw his idle daughters playing with parasols, which his own folly had purchased—" Pair of soles!" said he, " I wonder what it means!—Does

it mean, that the poor old father shall walk his shoes off his feet, to put idle girls on horseback? Pair of soles?—does it mean, that the poor old father and mother shall slave, and almost sell their *souls*, to send their mincing, idle girls, about the village, when they ought to be churning;—dressing them up, when they ought to be washing shirts and sheets?" "La, Pa! what's the matter, pa?" said Miss Tiny, making up to him. "Get away, you lazy slut; what will you ever be good for?" and then he muttered something between his teeth, about Mr. Kemp.—"No; he has more sense." Miss Louisa, thinking to divert her father's anger, by making him laugh, said, "she supposed Mr. Kemp would marry Betty Smith; and indeed it would be a very good match for him; she would take care nothing should be wasted."—"A good thing, too; there's no need to sneer at Betty Smith; she was a much prettier girl than any of you." They stared at one another, and were silent.—"And, that you may learn not to turn up your noses, and give yourselves airs, your mother's father was carter to Betty Smith's father." This was no time for Mrs. Jennings to offend her husband; indeed, she was not a woman to offend any one; but she was hurt that he should let her down, as *she* thought, before her

own children, and the tears sprang to her eyes, and she looked vexed and pained. Her husband was sorry; for she had been a good wife: so he said, "Come, come, Mary; you and I have travelled comfortably, don't let you and I fall out for a trifle; but do set these idle girls to work; for work they must, or they must starve. I never see them do one earthly thing of use. They seem very busy, and what is it all about? They can't even make their own clothes. I heard them talk this morning about a new dress-maker. Well, thinks I, to buy them and pay for them, that's enough —sure they might tack them together." "La, pa!" said Miss Antoinette, (who thought she would try once again)—"La, pa! why, didn't you know that the dress-making was quite a business of itself?" In vain mamma frowned, to make her child understand that *this* was not the right time, and that papa could not bear it. The foolish girl proceeded, till her father's choler became ungovernable. They *should* go out, he declared they *should* go out, and get their living some how; and he pulled at the harmless curtain. "And what's this good for, but to make the people laugh at ye?—No; if they won't dairy at my house, they *shall* dairy some where else. Now, ye know my mind; ye shall get your

living—ye *shall*, I say!"—The girls were terrified. The thing he said, he stood to, right or wrong; and not all their mother's nods and smiles could cheer them; they anticipated all the degradation, in the eyes of those whom they had often despised, and treated insolently; and they judged by themselves, that it would be a triumph to their inferiors. Even poor Esther, whom they had that morning visited with the air of patronage, they concluded would be among their enemies. Little did they know the heart of this excellent girl. But time developed it; and, the being on whom they had looked down, became, in the strictest sense of the word, their benefactress.

Mr. Jennings had always been considered a thriving man; but he, like many others, had lived up to his gains, and was now experiencing the inconvenience; the daughters had judged their father's property as commensurate with his expenditure. This was by no means the case. He entirely depended on the times; and, as his property was sinking every year in value, so he was getting poorer; and, seeing no probable means of providing for his expensive family, "poverty was coming upon him like an armed man;" and his high-blown hopes, breaking suddenly beneath

him, soured his temper; and, in the midst of these mortifications, he became unjust, and cast the whole blame of his own errors on his family. They, unused to controul, high spirited and vain; systematically determined to oppose the necessary changes; and seemed ready to prefer any expedient, to that which good sense and necessity pointed out. The brother, too, had been accustomed to the life of a gentleman. The few farming orders he gave, were soon expedited; and considered as a burden that must be borne, to keep father in temper. Such was the state of things in Mr. Jennings's family, when Michael, coolly declining the honour of the alliance, had seemed to open the old man's eyes more clearly to their real situation. Mrs. Jennings was, in fact, the most to be pitied of the party. She was an ignorant, good-tempered woman, who had worked very hard to exalt her children; and, though it was misguided zeal, one cannot but pity the parents, whose blind fondness hath led them to spend their labour for that which satisfieth not. And surely, it will touch every mother with sympathy, to see any one thus disappointed in hopes cherished for so many years, and to find herself surrounded by a set of listless, indolent beings, awake to no exertion, but that of

vanity;—cherishing no hopes, but the unfounded ones of romantic promotion, to which neither their birth, education, or personal attractions, had in the remotest degree entitled them. We cannot feel for them; but we *do* feel for the weak, suffering parent.

Mr. Lascelles, whose goodness of heart was universally acknowledged, by people who did not understand his principles, was the first person of whom Mr. Jennings thought, in his present exigencies:—"he would go to him straight, that he would!" So he began to walk quicker and quicker up and down his little parlour—"yes, I'll go; I'll go and consult with him." He had scarcely walked half way, ere he was met by his excellent pastor, whose keen eye saw at a glance, that something more than ordinary was working in his mind. "Well, my good Sir," said this kind-hearted minister, "so you are walking away very briskly this afternoon." "I was just going to your house, Sir."—"Indeed! why I don't very often see you there, Mr. Jennings."—"No, sir, that's very true; and I don't know that you would have seen me now, if I had been quite easy in my mind. Where all is right, we seldom think of the parson."—*Mr. Lascelles.* "I cannot understand that." *Mr. J.*—"Why, ye see, Sir, times of dan-

ger, and death, and such like, are times when ye are most wanted; it seems like your business, Sir, then."—*Mr. L.* "Well, Sir; if you have any thing painful or distressing to communicate, will you do me the pleasure to walk to my house; any counsel or assistance *I* can afford you, are freely yours." The farmer was unused to such prompt kindness;—it seemed to affect him; he stammered out something about "he didn't deserve such kindness;" while Mr. Lascelles continued to say, that "any thing within his power——and it would be a pleasure to oblige him."

By this time they reached the Rectory. As they entered the parlour, where Mrs. L. was sitting at work with her two little girls, they rose with that cordial politeness, which they were in the habit of practising continually; and Mr. Jennings was impressed with respect, for which he could not account. Thus it is, where urbanity is the ruling principle. It insensibly awes the mind, and prevents those advances to familiarity, which the ignorant are sure to fall into, unless thus repressed. They gathered up their little work-baskets. "Pray, madam, don't disturb yourself, I can speak afore you;"—and these few words from Mr. Lascelles—"you had better remain, my love,"—determined her; and she resumed

her seat. There was something formidable, both to the speaker and to the hearers, in this interview. There never had been any thing like cordiality between them. Mr. Lascelles entirely disapproved of the manner in which this family was conducted; but of course, he never interfered; and a lofty politeness alone, of which they felt the force, kept them at a distance, and made them feel they were not in the number of his particular favourites. Yet, such was the confidence which true worth ever inspires, that there was not a moment's hesitation in the mind of Mr. Jennings, as to whom he should turn in sorrow. "Why, madam," said the farmer, twisting his hat about, and placing his stick quietly on the ground, "I've got a large family, and the times are very hard: and I thought, among your great relations and friends, and acquaintances, and what not, you might know of a situation as might suit some of my daughters. I thought they might do, (for they've had the best of educations,) for governesses to young ladies; or, perhaps, they would not mind waiting on a lady of quality, only they must not be obliged to be in the servants' hall. They would'nt mind dining with the chaplain, or any thing of that."—"Mr. Jennings," said Mr. Lascelles, "the chaplain sits at the table of his lord,

where his rank places him; and, of course, would not be the companion of ladies' maids."—"Oh, I ask pardon, Sir; I didn't know."—"I thought you *did not*, and therefore I stated the fact; but, I really think your daughters would find the most permanent employment, as housekeepers in some steady family, or perhaps they might take in work."—Mr. Jennings hemmed; for he felt conscious they were incompetent to either. "My dear," said Mrs. Lascelles, "it strikes *me*, that Miss Jennings might keep a preparatory school for boys, under their father's roof. I cannot go out much, Mr. Jennings; but I think I could be of use to your daughters in this way; I have two dear little nephews coming on a visit to me, and if your daughters would come to my house every day, for a month, I would point to them such things, as they must principally attend to, in the training of little boys, as to their manners and habits, and point them to such books, as would be most likely to facilitate their progress."

"Madam, you are all goodness," said the happy father; "I will go home, and tell my daughters;" and Mr. Jennings returned to his own house. No sooner was the door closed, than Mr. Lascelles said, "Now, Mentoria, with your sense, and just discrimination, how you could ever

think of making the Miss Jennings's governesses to gentlemen's children, I cannot conceive!" "Why, my dear, little boys want to be kept nicely clean, and to take good exercise; and there are a few little gentlemanly habits, which I thought I could put Miss Jennings in the way of teaching them." "Doubtless you could; but, my love, where is the refinement of mind, and the thousand nameless delicacies, which none but a polished character could impart; and then, Mentoria, what can you do without the piety?" Mrs. Lascelles was silent; she felt that her husband was right. "I am in for it, my dear; what can I do?" "Do nothing: I am persuaded Miss Jennings will decline the employment; and, in that case, you know, the business is finished. It is an arduous undertaking, my love; and girls of such idle habits, will not easily be induced to accept such a charge."

As Mr. Lascelles had foreseen, so it proved. When the honest farmer, with heart elate, related to his wife all the goodness of Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles, she was pleased to see him pleased; but she greatly feared, whether her daughters would like to slave after children. "Would they like to eat, woman; tell me that?" said her husband. She was frightened at his

angry manner of speaking; and replied, "My dear, I can't think what is come to you to day; ye are not like yourself."—"No; that's very true; I am not. I have been a thriving man; that day is gone by; I'm poor, and I've a parcel of idle, gaping people about me, that can't bring in a shilling, and have got rare appetites; and want to be dressed out every day of their lives, like Duchesses. Oh, how much better would my girls look in a tidy stuff gown, like Fanny Meredith, at the Mill." "Fanny Meredith, indeed!" said Mrs. Jennings, with an involuntary look of astonishment; "I hope, Mr. Jennings, you don't compare my daughters with Fanny Meredith!" "Indeed I do not; I think Fanny Meredith as much beyond my daughters, in every respect, as Mr. Lascelles is beyond me." "Why, my dear, you seem to take a delight to bring me low to-day; first, to humble me before my children, about my poor dear father that's dead, and now to be trampling down my children to the dust, as I may say." "Wife; I never did mean to fret ye; but ye are very foolish about your children; ye seem blind to all their nonsense, and can't see a fault they have got." "Well, my dear, if I can't see their faults, I think you can't see their good qualities." This

gentle speech of the poor, vexed mother, had its effect; and he again said, "Mary, I do not wish to grieve you; but the girls are out of their places, and ye must be sensible on't." "Well, my dear, let us put them in gently." "Very well; only see that it *is* done." He gave her his hand, and she went to seek her daughters.

Louisa was standing with her back to the door, when her mother entered, putting her drawers in order; Antoinette was sitting on one chair, her feet on another, and a book in her lap, reading. "Come, put by the book; I want to speak to you, girls. Why don't ye speak, Louisa? I'm worried out of my life." "Mother, how could I speak; I had three pins in my mouth; but you are in such a fluster; what is the matter now?" "I came to tell you what Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles have been saying." "Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles! Why, I never knew as they were much acquainted with our family!" "No, indeed, nor I; but your father seems to have taken an odd turn; he has been and opened all his heart." "What! to Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles?" Tiny laughed, and said, "she supposed papa was going to turn Methodist." "Well, don't worry me, girls; but hear what I've got to tell you." They had scarcely patience to

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hear their mother through. "I'd sooner be Becky, our girl, who washes the milk-pails, than I'd be tagging with a pack of little boys, two and two, before me to church. No, I thank you, mother; it shan't be said of me, that I'm a hard-hearted governess, seizing the poor little struggling things, just as the hawks do the young chickens. Much obliged to Mrs. Lascelles, all the same. Pray, who are we to thank for this very kind thought? Is it pa's own, or did Madam Lascelles put it in his head?" "Whose thought it is, I don't know," said the mother; "but *this* I know, that between ye all, I'm pretty nigh weary of my life; and when I'm laid under the green sod, perhaps ye may know that ye had once a good mother:" and with the dread of what she should say to her husband, she sank down in an hysteric fit.

The farmer had determined to give his wife sufficient time for explanation; so he mounted his horse, and rode off to a farmer's, about five miles distant. The first thought the young ladies had, was to run down, and fetch papa to assist in recovering mamma; and, by endeavouring to put into his head that mamma's distress was on account of the new plan, effectually to stop him. But, in this they were completely disappointed. Their father was

out, the sisters were gone for a walk, and there was not a single creature but themselves in the house. So the hartshorn was fetched, and cold water, and all the remedies they could think of; but it was full two hours before she was restored; and they then prevailed on her to go to bed, where her wearied frame at length reposed in peace. Still, they cherished a hope of being the first to inform their father. They knew he was fond of his wife, and would not willingly do any thing to teaze her. At length he arrived, and they began with a melancholy story, how ill poor mamma had been. "It's just as I thought; you are a couple of undutiful girls." Vain was remonstrance, and endeavours to persuade him, that it was the thought of parting with them which distressed her, and made her so ill. "Your mother was very well, when I left her, and would not all at once have been so distressed; you must have said something to worry her; I will know the truth. If I don't get it from you, I will from her." "Oh, pray, papa, do not begin again, and vex her beyond every thing." "Then speak the truth. When she proposed what I sent her about to you, did you make any, or the slightest objection?" "Of course, papa, we did not like to leave you and mamma and home." "Come, let's have

no nonsense, girls; say the truth, and the truth only; you deal fairly with me, and I'll be a kind father to you. You've set your faces against this plan of Mr. Lascelles." "I would rather do any thing, papa!" "Well, do something, I don't care what it is, but something ye *must* do." "I'd rather be a dressmaker, a great deal." "Can ye work, either of ye?" "Dear me, yes, to be sure we can!" "I didn't know it, I never saw any of your work." "I'm sure, papa, that's very odd," said Tiny, "the handkerchief you have got on now I hemmed and marked for you." "Well, I'm glad to hear ye can do something." The girls were glad to escape so well, and the plan was put in train the next day, of which we will speak more at a future time.

But I am anxious to return to my old friends; and perhaps the reader will have no objection to hear a little of Ellen Meredith, of Jemima, and of all our Valley Farm acquaintances. It was long since Stephen had seen his mother, and he had often anxiously desired and earnestly pressed her to come, but so many children were a great tie, and now Ellen was living at the Farm with Mrs. Finch, so she could be less easily spared. But the time was now come, when Michael was to make

one of his quarterly payments to Mrs. Finch, and as it was rather a leisure time with Stephen, he proposed going to the Valley, and visiting his mother. Stephen, on the old sure footed mare, with his young Michael before him, set out on his journey. How beautifully clean the fair haired boy was made, and how lovely his mother thought him in his nankeen vest and tunic, will easily be conceived and need not be related. Stephen took two days for the journey, on account of the child, and the old mare. As they drew near the scene of his early days, how did his heart vibrate to every sight and sound. There was the pond where he had led his horses to water, there was the spire among the trees, there were the chimnies of the Valley Farm, and now appeared in sight a group of children: here every trace of remembrance was lost: if he had known these, it must have been in the earliest stages of their life, and they could not remember him. So he looked anxiously forward for something more advanced, and soon his delighted eye rested on the form of his beloved sister, and he was soon recognized by this dear relative. "Is that your boy? Oh the lovely creature!" He was snatched from the horse with all the ardour of wild delight. The child had

from earliest infancy been so accustomed to hear his father called Stephen, that he had caught the word, and most frequently addressed him by that familiar epithet; and though every one thought it wrong, yet there was something so droll and amusing in it, that they had never properly checked him, so that when off guard, he continually said it, though never before uncle Michael, who seriously disapproved it; saying, it lessened that respect which ought to be rendered by a child to a parent. At this moment he exclaimed, "Oh Stephen, take me, take me." Ellen gave him up, and hearing him call her brother Stephen, she concluded he was not her nephew. "Are you going to the Level Bit?" "No, first to the Valley, I have business with your mistress: is she at home?" "Yes, and I'm sure will be glad to see you, it was but yesterday she was speaking of you with great kindness." In ten minutes he was in the presence of his old mistress, with his child in his arms. "Nice little boy," said Miss Jemima, "and are you Fanny Kemp's? then I must love you;" and she folded him gently in her arms. He made no resistance, and the maid bringing in the tea, and the bread and butter, he took a bit from her hand, as though she were an old acquaint-

ance, sitting quietly on her knee, and betraying no desire to leave her.

There is something remarkable in the influence which some persons possess over children: whether it is that some act more sensibly, and that the children feel the power, I know not, but there is certainly a great difference, and they are much sooner subdued by the authority of one person than that of another. Michael had more influence with this boy than his own father; and often remonstrated very seriously with both parents, on what he called their democratical form of government. "If your boy turns out well, all will be well, if *not*, you will live to repent this." Fanny would reply, "Oh, my dear brother, I long to see how you will govern your own children." "I hope *well* my dear: I think it is a duty every man owes to society, not to bring up rebellious members to the state." "I never viewed it in that light." "But you safely *may*, for the child that does not obey his own parents, is not likely to obey his king." "This is a very serious view you take of it, I shall attend to what you say." "Do, I have thought much of it: our father always brought us up well in that respect," said Michael. "In *every* respect," said Fanny. "Yes, certainly, but I mean to

say he insisted on our obedience. Thinking as you think," Michael replied, "I am surprised you did not follow his example." "Well, my dear brother, I am convinced, and you may rely on my attention to what you say." "Do, Fanny, for it involves important consequences." Thus they argued, and thus they always closed. Michael never insisted but when he knew he was really right, and Fanny always yielded, conscious that Michael never opposed without the deepest conviction of what he said, and if she had one mental reservation, it was only this, we shall see when my brother is a father: thus their little disputes ever ended, with an increase of love on both sides. Stephen, the judicious Stephen, much as he loved his Fanny, would say, "Why now, 'tis a pity my wife should argue against her brother, for he's sure to know best."

Reader, pardon this little peep at the internal politics of this happy family.

"Well, you seem very happy, Michael," said the fond father, "shall I leave you with that lady?" He looked at her, then looked round, and said, "Stay a little with that lady." "Sweet, lovely creature," said Jemima, "the very image of his mother, all her delightful openness of countenance!" Ellen thought to her-

self, "nothing can be more charming than my brother, and I think the boy is like *him*." So indeed he *was*, for he resembled both; but he had a peculiar cast of countenance which belonged to Fanny. It was not beauty, but something which went more to the heart, it seemed to say, what no human countenance *can* say, "I have no thought which seeks concealment," and though this cannot be, yet the mere semblance pleases us. "If you please, Ma'am," said Stephen, "I must take my boy to see his grandmother. I fear she would be hurt if she did not see him soon." "True," said Mrs. Finch, "I'm sure *I* should. I think you had better take him."

It was a sweet walk, the young father with his lovely boy, and the fond aunt gazing on him, anticipating the pleasure of the grandmother and grandfather, nor did they overrate the joy their presence would occasion. The neat inmates of the Level Bit clustered eagerly around the newly arrived. Stephen's delight was not without check, for he saw time making inroads on the countenances of both his parents. It was four years since they had met, and the silent stealing of time's footsteps was visible to the eye of Stephen, and he could not help anticipating, when

the manly form of his father, and the feminine one of his mother, should be laid in the grave;——yet they shall rise to life and immortality——"Thou art musing, boy," said his father, "thou art thinking there's one wanting, and so there is, but I suppose it couldn't be helped." "No, Father," said Stephen, and he was glad of this turn given to his thoughts, "Fanny couldn't leave baby, and it was too far to travel with such a young child." "Yes, indeed," said his mother, "I should love to see her." "I am come to fetch you," said Stephen, "I will not be refused, my Fanny has set her heart on having her mother."

Stephen knew his mother's feelings, and that she needed this assurance, for circumstances had prevented those minute attentions which the rich are able to pay. Their obligations to Michael were great, and had not yet been all discharged, and they felt they had no right to be generous at his expense; therefore he was aware his mother might think he had been negligent, and his heart longed to explain to her and his father, which he took an early opportunity of doing. It was delightful intercourse, which this heart explanation led to. "You have thought I forgot you,

my dear mother?" "*I*, Stephen, never, no, never. There's a text in the scripture, 'My heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly,' and when I've been thinking of you, Stephen, my heart showeth me the love of my boy! Now, how could you suppose we expect any thing of you, young housekeepers like you!" "Well, mother, I'm glad ye did me justice, for my heart has yearned after you." "I'm very glad to hear ye say so, my dear, though I never doubted it; and now I'll show ye something that pleased me greatly, though I could not take it, Stephen. When I came to put the boy to bed, pretty fellow, down dropped a small packet out of his night shift, I observed that it was pinned up very carefully, and when I came to look, it was directed, 'For my mother Meredith,' and when I opened it, it contained this two pound note, three half crowns, and a sovereign. Now the letter I shall keep, but for the money, I could not, my dear boy; we do not want it, I think it would be wicked to take it." "Pray let me see the note, my dear mother, for I knew nothing of this business." "No, that's the beauty of the whole; oh, you're a lucky boy, Stephen!" "God has been very good

to me, mother." "Indeed he has." Fanny's note ran thus:

My dear Mother,

These were gifts to Fanny Kemp when she married, and Fanny Meredith therefore has a right to dispose of them: they were laid by for purposes for which they never have been wanted, and I hope they will help you to come to Stephen and your own Fanny. Now the half crowns are for the boys, and the sovereign for Ellen Meredith.

"But I think its a shame to take it." "Now, dear mother, if it would really make you uneasy, lay it out at some future day for the children, but do not refuse Fanny." "Well, my dear, I will do as you say: I think I may be safely guided by him; husband, what do you think?" "Why I think I should not like to refuse that sweet young creature, because I believe its a pleasure to her to do us any kindness." "That it *is* father—Pray how does Ellen go on at the Valley?" "Why, my dear, very well, but there's been a very disagreeable thing happened lately; Poor Williamson, honest, excellent old creature." "Yes, that he is, I hope nothing has happened to him?" "Nothing

very bad, only he took it into his head to fall in love with poor Ellen, and he said, he supposed she could not fancy him, and to be sure she could not: he has left her every shilling he may die worth, but it has made her place rather uncomfortable to her, because she does not like to see him unhappy, and she talks of leaving. I spoke to her mistress, and she said, poor foolish old man, I'm sorry for him. I replied, I hope you will not think the worse of our Ellen, and she said, poor thing, no, how can she help it? I am sadly vexed Williamson should be so very foolish, though to say truth, he has shown good taste, for Ellen is a nice looking girl." "Indeed she *is*, though I'm her brother that say it." "And why should not a brother speak well of his own sister, my boy?" "I'm sure I cannot tell, mother, its generally reckoned like praising oneself. Good night and good night, and I must go early to the Valley to-morrow, for though I went there first to settle some business for my master, I was so full of my boy, and talking of old times, that I quite forgot it: but it will do as well in the morning." "Pray, Stephen, is it true, a report that I have heard, that your master pays Mrs. Finch a hundred pounds a year?" "Indeed it is: I'm now come with the money in

my pocket." "Well, that is an extraordinary thing: who but your master would do such a thing as this?" "I'm sure I don't know, but he's not like any body else that ever I saw, he is so generous and yet he is so prudent." "Ah, that's the perfection of generosity, I think," said Meredith, and with this observation they separated for the night.

"I was in hopes," said Stephen, as he entered his room, "that my poor father would have proposed prayer, I couldn't say any thing, my lips seemed sealed. Is this the fear of man? Oh no, 'tis not, it really is not: but it is the fear of appearing to reprove my father, and that seems so unbecoming in me, that I cannot bear it: but I *can* and will pray for them," and this good son knelt down and prayed most fervently, that it would please God to enlighten his dear relations. This prayer was offered in faith, and if it was not answered, we well know that it was never offered in vain: it doubtless turned into his own bosom.

The repose of cottagers is commonly, in the language of scripture, "sweet." Stephen might be said to rise with the lark, for its matin peal was the first sound that greeted his ear, and his infant prattler, wearied with change and excitement, was

long ere his baby form seemed ready for the activity of the day. "Very sleepy, Stephen," and the fond parent breathed a father's prayer. He lingered, for he did not like to leave him to wake among strangers, lest surprise and alarm should succeed: but he found it useless to wait; so little uncle Frank was set to watch, while Stephen went to the Valley. The song of the early bird accompanied the tender father, and his heart was in tune for enjoyment, praise flowed spontaneously from his lips, and a sense of the divine presence gave the purest tinge to his spirit. Peace now, and peace for ever! His bosom swelled at the thought, and the expansive sense of incomprehensible blessedness, gave him for one moment an idea of unlimited happiness. Oh, what do the worldly lose, who confine their views and their pleasures to the base pursuits of earth! To the Christian, not a leaf trembling on the spray is indifferent! not a sound that is pleasurable but elevates him, not a voice that is alarming but fills him with gratitude to the author of his security! Safe, happen what may, who that had ever tasted these sublime sensations, would exchange them for the baubles of time; wealth, power, titles and distinctions, flattering, but fleeting and insecure. The

finger of the Almighty, pointed in displeasure, would wither the fairest earthly prospect, and chill the warmest hope: "At the blasting of the breath of thy displeasure," finely expresses what I would convey.

When Stephen arrived at the Valley, he saw Miss Jemima with her Bible in her hand, in her favourite walk: she slipped the volume into her pocket, and with condescending Christian simplicity, bade the young man a good morning; "and how is your little fellow-traveller, Stephen?" "Well, Madam, but asleep; I thought it best not to disturb him, for the weather is warm, and he is very young: I must be careful of my trust, or I know not what his mother will say; I was obliged to beg hard for the pleasure of introducing him to his grandmother, he was *so* young, and it was *so* far." "All very natural," said Jemima, "and he really is *so* fine a creature. I suppose his uncle is very fond of him?" "Yes, Madam, indeed he is. Could I see my mistress? I quite forgot last night to deliver a parcel I had for her, and I made a point of coming down with it as soon as I rose, for I really did not feel easy till I had delivered it." When Mrs. Finch entered, Stephen again apologized for his omission, and his excuse was

readily granted. "Shut the door, my dear Jemima. I suppose, Stephen, your mother has told you this foolish business of poor Williamson?" "Yes, Ma'am." "I never knew the man so weak," said Mrs. Finch, and she kept walking up and down the room in fidgetty uneasiness, "I suppose I must part with Ellen, its very awkward for the poor girl. I am so entirely satisfied with her, it vexes me exceedingly." "I'm very glad, Ma'am, you are pleased with my sister, and concerned at the necessity of her leaving you; but as you observe, it seems almost unavoidable." "Do you know of any place, Stephen, that might suit her?" "I dare say I could hear of one, Madam; what do you think her most qualified for?" "She works so well with her needle, that I think she might undertake a better place than mine." "Indeed, Madam, I never expect my sister to be better off than she is in your family, your unceasing kindness, and that of Miss Jemima to me and mine, make me very sorry for this necessary separation." "Well, you will think of your sister, Stephen, there is no haste, but I think it would be better she should go." "Undoubtedly, Ma'am." "I dare say you will be concerned to hear, *that* poor dishonest creature *Mason* has come to an

untimely end. He was engaged in a quarrel at a public-house, and following the person (in a hurry) down the stairs his foot slipped, and his head struck forcibly on some of the stones which lay at the bottom of the rough staircase: he received a violent blow on the temple: his medical attendant saw no immediate danger, but the fever which succeeded, was increased by the indiscreet use of strong liquor. I'm sorry to say his end was very awful. No contrition, but a rebellious, hardened spirit was manifest through the whole. His wife and children are come to the parish, but should she behave prudently, she will not want friends. Poor Mr. Kemp was never forgiven that removal, and Mrs. Fairbrother has gone so far as to say, it was the ruin of the family. Mr. Cooper, whose love of justice you well know, was so displeased by this, that he called on her, and insisted she should retract this unjust aspersion; he assured her if she did not, he should regard her as a person dangerous, and no longer consider her as an object worthy his accustomed attention. This alarmed her, for Mr. Cooper is a most liberal benefactor in many ways to this perverse woman: and Jemima, my dear, though you don't quite agree with Mr. Cooper, I believe in some

things, you know how very good he has been to this woman." "Yes, indeed, mother, Mr. Cooper is very liberal."

Stephen perceived that Mrs. Finch seemed pained that her daughter's praise of Mr. Cooper was qualified, for Jemima did not speak of him in the warm terms which she thought he merited, she said a few minutes after, "Your Mr. Lascelles is every thing with Jemima, pray how does he do, Mr. Stephen?" "Very well, Madam, he goes on doing every body good." "Oh yes, he does every body good, I dare say, he is a very good sort of man I believe: but I think there are other good men in the world besides Mr. Lascelles." Jemima was silent. Stephen only replied, "Certainly, Ma'am. How is your son, Madam, Mr. James Finch?" "Nearly as tall as you, Stephen, he makes his mother look an old woman." "Master was saying, Madam, he expected him in our parts." "Yes, it will not be his fault if he does not soon make one of your family at the Brow, but I hardly know how to spare him. You may tell Mr. Kemp I do not forget his promise to be a father to this boy if ever he loses his mother," and the tear trembled in her eye as she spoke. "I am sure I don't know any one I would trust him to sooner. I am happy to say

he is very steady." "Yes," said Jemima, "you may tell Mr. Kemp that he will give him no anxiety, Stephen, that he will be quite content to stay at home." "Yes," said Mrs. Finch, with a very peculiar look, "he is almost as good as his sister, tell your master." Jemima walked away without saying one word, and Stephen admired, what he justly thought her wise conduct.

This young woman had made up her mind to be guided completely by the word of God, this was her first determination, every other was contingent: all her views were fixed beyond time; she was like a traveller on a wide plain, who knowing that his path lies to the west, keeps his eye on some bright illuminated spot in the distance, and tramples beneath his feet without ever knowing it, thousands of vivid flowrets which attract other travellers: to *him* they are nothing, his object is distant, and all which can divert him from that end is indifferent to him, or disregarded by him. Jemima carefully avoided all that could offend her mother, and never contended for immaterial things. She would often say to herself, "Dear, excellent mother, in nothing that is immaterial or indifferent will I ever oppose thee."

Thus resolved, life glided by, its trials were met in a spirit of resignation, and its pleasures hailed with gratitude and warmth, and in all essential points the firmness of this excellent girl was never to be shaken. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: ye must be born again: without me ye can do nothing: he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it: look unto me and be ye saved." In the spirit and the letter these texts she never would resign, and it was on these subjects alone, where every pharisaical pretension was shaken to the root, that Jemima and her mother ever disagreed.

Mr. Cooper, the amiable, charitable Mr. Cooper, was Mrs. Finch's standard of perfection, and she knew she stood high in his opinion, and was perfectly astonished, that such a young girl as Jemima should have an opinion on such subjects: and poor Jemima was sometimes astonished herself, but then she would say again, "My poor mother, I cannot give it up. 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,' and oh how precious to me is thy soul, my mother." How often she prayed, and how fervently, can hardly be conceived by any who do not feel like anxiety for the eternal happiness of their relatives. Of all this the mother was ig-

norant, she only fancied that her poor girl had picked up some notions, concerning which she showed strange obstinacy, and she would often feel really astonished that she should stand out for such trifles, and frequently repeated, "Why, child, this is very well to the Bible people, but what is it to you and me?" "My dear mother, it is *every thing* to us, it is our hope, it is our life!" "I can't see it, Jemima." "Oh, my dear mother, I do wish you *could,* my uncle saw it and felt it." "My poor dear child, thy uncle had got some odd notions, and your head has been crammed with them ever since." "No, indeed, mother, not my head, but I can say my heart is warmed by them, and I look forward to a reunion with my beloved uncle through these hopes alone." "Well, Jemima, you are a good girl, and very dutiful to your mother, and I do love you most sincerely, and confide in you entirely, but to talk about that which I do not understand, and of which I cannot see the utility, you couldn't wish it, child," and thus their converse generally ended.

We must return to the Level Bit, and watch the waking of the little Michael. His young uncle had scarcely any patience with his charge. Rose had desired

him not to attempt waking him. "If you do," said Rose, "brother Stephen will never have you to the mill." This threat was hardly sufficient to keep Frank at his post; and now he touched him just with the tip of his finger, then again he pretended to lay the clothes straight, then he went to the window, and he coughed as loud as he could. At last he succeeded, and baby opened his eye to the great delight of the young prisoner. But no sooner was his eye opened, than it closed again, not indeed from weariness, but he saw not the object he sought, and he was fearful: at length hearing no one speak to him, he raised himself on his little fat elbow, and called loudly for Stephen: Rose immediately ran up to him, but every effort was ineffectual, he would not suffer her to touch him, and until his father returned, he sat vainly attempting to dress himself. But the manly child shed no tears, nor betrayed other impatience, except now and then calling, "Stephen, Stephen," to the great amusement of every member of the family who gathered round him. The fond father was soon at his side, and his boy's hand was clasped round him, and, "Where you been? where you go? where Fanny? where uncle Michael? Get my hat." Not yet my boy, we must have

some breakfast, and his delighted grandmother was not long ere his fondling affection was bestowed on her, and he was in the garden at the side of his grandfather, digging with his uncle Frank, and as much domesticated as any part of the family.

To the lover of infancy, its soft lispings have an irresistible charm, nothing is indifferent, every action is grace, and every word and tone finds its way to the heart. How have I bent over the glowing features of a sleeping babe, observed the smile which some illusive dream had created, and watched the meandering of the blue veins, and the fair open forehead, and how have I wished that disease might never prey upon that form, or sorrow agitate that panting bosom. It was a weak wish, it was a fruitless wish, disease hath visited, and sorrow hath made inroads, but it is over, and the mourner is at rest. Yes, he slept in peace!

Pardon this digression, reader, which the thought of sleeping infancy recalled.

Mrs. Meredith, at first, resisted the idea of going back with Stephen; but, at the end of three days, when he talked seriously of departing, the tear was in her eye, and she said, "Oh, my dear boy, how shall I part with you?" "There is no need, mother," said Stephen, "Ellen is coming

from her place, and she can guide the house here." "Well, my dear, I can have no objection; but we shall hear what your father says. I never did leave home before; and pray, how am I to go?" "That has all been thought of, mother. If you can get a tilted cart, we may ride very comfortably,"

The affair was arranged, and they set out. It was a pleasure that Fanny had never hoped for; and, though her husband said he should bring her, if possible, she could not conceive which way it might be effected.

We must pass over the interior of this heavy day, and let Williamson come in for orders. He had carefully avoided Stephen, for he was ashamed to see him. But, however, there was no escaping; for he must take orders; so he came in, and stood, as usual, while Mrs. Finch put questions, to which he gave his usual hesitating replies. But, there was something about Williamson, which, with all his errors, was sure to make its way to the heart of his hearers; and, ere he had finished, his faults were forgotten. They both looked at him with the same feeling, and concern that an honest, respectable man, had made himself ridiculous. To the astonishment of both Mrs. Finch and Stephen, he pounced upon the subject. "I dare say, you have heard

what an old fool I've made of myself; but I couldn't help it; it shall be made up to her, for all the trouble I've given her; every shilling I have shall be hers." "Oh, do not talk of it," said Stephen; "we should all be sorry to lose you, Williamson." "I'm sure I can't tell what for; I'm a stupid, blundering old fellow." He desired to be remembered to Mr. Kemp and Fanny, and seemed glad to slink out of the room as he had slunk in. "I'm sorry for him," said Mrs. Finch; "he has made himself unhappy to no purpose. I depend on you to bear your sister in mind, and to let us know of the first eligible situation".

Stephen departed in a little tax-cart with his mother, for his own dwelling. The meeting was cordial on both sides, and Stephen's mother had the appearance of the wife of some respectable yeoman. Though, after marriage, Stephen's affections were diverted into another channel, he felt what we wish to impress on the hearts of children, how necessary it is for their own happiness, to pay these minor attentions to their parents. It sweetens life's decline, to find gratitude in those on whom they have lavished so much care.

The thought struck Stephen, that perhaps Mrs. Lascelles might want an upper servant, and he knew no human being, to

whose care he would so soon entrust his sister. He considered himself unfortunate in thus breaking up a happy family; but there was no alternative: either Williamson, or Ellen; and this man was so necessary to his mistress, that the bare idea was rejected immediately. When it was mentioned to Fanny, she said, "The sooner you go the better; for places are no sooner empty, than there are persons to whom the place is an object. They are treated with such kindness, and the examples continually before them are of so excellent a tendency, that one ought rather to rejoice than to hesitate. So away my dear man."

When he reached the Rectory, he found Mrs. Lascelles deeply engaged. She entreated him to stop a little, and she would attend him. "Madam," said Stephen, as he entered the room. She bade him a cordial good morning, and hoped the little excursion had been useful to him and the child. These kind speeches past, and Stephen opened his feelings. "I have a sister, Ma'am, a very steady young person, who has been at service many years, and quits her mistress, not for any fault, but on account of some particular circumstances. I thought, perhaps, you might know of some place that would suit her; and, if you

did, I'm sure I should be very thankful to have my sister in any situation you were so good as to recommend." "Mr. Meredith, is your sister, may I ask you, is she a religious character?" "I cannot say, Madam, in confidence, that she *is*; but she is not an opposer; and I believe she respects religious people: indeed, I know she does." "Where has she lived, Mr. Meredith?" "Ever since my wife quitted, she has lived in the employment of Mrs. Finch, and her mistress speaks very highly of her, and would not have parted with her, but"— "But what, Mr. Meredith; for I like to know the cause of separation?" "I should not, Madam, have taken the liberty of telling you things of this sort, but as you desire it;" and he related the circumstances which led to Ellen's quitting. Mrs. Lascelles smiled, and said, she "thought the young woman perfectly right; and assured him, that if she could in any way assist her views, she would bear her in mind."

As soon as Mr. Lascelles returned from his walk, she related Stephen's visit, and its cause. He appeared thoughtful for a minute, and then said, "I should not wonder if this was the very young woman, of whom I heard Mr. Walker speak, as a person distinguished by Mr.

Kemp; and only resigned for the best of reasons, that he did not think her a religious character." "That is very likely; for I put the question to Mr, Meredith, and he honestly said, he could not regard her in that light." "Well, then, do you take care, my love, not to lead my flock astray, by introducing Moabitish women." "Oh, my dear; and so you would keep this poor young creature from the privileges of sitting under a Gospel ministry, for fear Mr. Kemp and your other good young men, should lose their hearts." "I would; and so look to it, my dear. Do not bring temptation in the way of my good young men; it would be like introducing him into the same house; he *must* see her continually. No, it must not be; you know plenty of folks, Mentoria; you *must* get her a place at a distance."

Mrs. L. "You are a dear, arbitrary thing; and I must obey, I suppose." "Yes, indeed." "Well, enough then for the present. I really know of no place; and I shall not be very active in search; because, such a young woman as this, will not long be in want, and I had rather have nothing to do with it. But, I should like to hear why you make such a great point, of not introducing her in our village?" *Mr. L.* "Simply for the reason I mention to you. I know

how pleased our excellent friend, Walker, was with the firmness of Mr. Kemp's principles, in a case where few men's principles are firm; and I should be sorry we turned tempters. Walker pointed her out to me, and related the circumstances on the day Mr. and Mrs. Meredith were married; if you recollect a tall girl, of very pleasing exterior?" "My love, you know I was not there." "True, true; I had forgotten that." "But I have some faint remembrance, that you mentioned it to me in the evening, and with high commendation of the steadiness of Mr. Kemp's principles." "Yes, I did. There are a variety of consultations in the world; I have had one of a very different nature. I have been asked this afternoon to get a place at Court for a gentleman." "Indeed! Who can it be for?" "You must guess." "Is it your clerk? Does he wish to be clerk at the Chapel Royal?"

Mr. L. Oh, no indeed; nothing so humble as that, I assure you; it was to be about the person; some little light work, he didn't care what; just something to do, and a good salary; he would not have minded how light the work, because he's getting old; he liked to see the King on Court days, and he should not mind if it was not more than £200 a year.

Mrs. L. Who can you have been talking to; some deranged person, I suppose?

Mr. L. No, indeed; a substantial farmer in this place.

Mrs. L. Oh, I know now; there can be but one; it must be Mr. Joyce.

Mr. L. The very same. Always some castle, poor man; on the very brink of eternity, and yet perpetually planning some change. Never satisfied; always full of hopes. Some new relative starting up; some consequent change in his mode of life. It may be truly said of him, "he is like the troubled sea, which cannot rest." Poor Mr. Joyce; his history is a remarkable one. He was born with very good expectations; his father was a man who had travelled in early life, and it was his great delight to tell his adventures: there was not an island in the Mediterranean, in which he had not had some personal adventure. Like most travellers, he was thought to exceed the truth in his descriptions; and, it was a standing joke against him, that he went from Majorca to Minorca in a post-chaise. Nothing provoked him more, than to ask him in what vehicle he made such or such a journey. As his fortune was easy, and his connexions limited to this village, he was reduced to the necessity of taking his pipe at the fire-side

of our little public-house, where he was looked up to as an oracle. One may truly say, he lived upon the husks of his past adventures; for nothing new could arise. He got old and infirm; and the extent of his travels was from his own fire-side, to that of 'mine host,' and I believe sincere tears were dropped on his grave, by the landlord and his wife. This boy was the only child of his parents. His abilities were not great; and his father being accustomed to a constant recital, thought more of shining himself, than of making his son a brilliant character. I believe the village schoolmistress's stock of knowledge, with a couple of years at a very moderate boarding-school, finished his education. He married very young, and very imprudently; and being now a widower, without children, very tired of his wife's relations, who have preyed upon him for many years, seems desirous to begin life anew, and to try the humours of the Court, having been greatly disappointed in the village. I told him 'I really had no interest.' He seemed surprised; and said, 'he thought your uncle was a Lord, and he had always understood that Lords could do any thing.' I told him laughingly, that 'as soon as your uncle had made me a Bishop, he should have all my interest; but, as I did not expect that, I

thought we had better try to make ourselves happy in that state of life in which it had pleased God to call us.' He seemed to attribute that to my want of will, which you well know my limited power forbids; but he is too weak a man to talk with rationality, and I did not wish to pain him, by placing his absurdity in the right light; so I withdrew, assuring him he must apply elsewhere for Court favour. "It is astonishing," said Mrs. Lascelles, "how minds of a certain cast expect the most preposterous advancement; and ask as coolly for £200 a year, as a child would for a bit of bread and butter, when he was hungry. I have heard my uncle say, he had taken the pains to note every application which had been made to him; and he believed, that were it possible to balance the account, there were not places in the kingdom to satisfy the demands."

We left Miss Jennings and her sisters in the uneasy state of persons compelled to work against their will, with an angry father and a fatigued mother, a giddy harebrained brother, as unfit to provide for himself as his sisters, and on the following morning the father was in the same state of determination that something they should do, without pointing to any thing. They really were to be pitied more than blamed,

for the only destination to which their education had pointed was marriage, and of that there seemed no probability of their being called on to fill. Their heads were crammed with romantic notions, their persons decorated beyond their station, their conversation consisted mostly of weak, short sentences, delivered in a decisive tone, only intercepted by a vacant laugh, sometimes very good, sometimes abominable, shocking, horrid, equally inapplicable, so that they were unfit to teach and unwilling to learn, not an uncommon state. The heart of Mrs. Lascelles might be said to yearn over them; she felt that the blame was with their parents, and thought it hard that they should thus suddenly be thrust into the world without a hand to guide or direct them. After supper, as she sat in converse with her husband, "but these Miss Jennings', my dear, if you do not think them competent to the care of boys, what can they do?" "That must be *your* concern, my love; I have not the most remote idea how to provide for ignorance and indolence."

The following morning Esther Humphries brought home some dresses for the Misses Lascelles. As she was leaving the room she said, "Madam, two young ladies called on me to look at dresses, but I did

not take the liberty of showing Miss Lascelles' without your leave." "Oh, my good girl, that was all very right and proper, but I give you leave to show any thing of mine or my daughters, if it can be of the slightest service to you; but I did not know there were any young ladies in this village." "Ma'am, their name was Jennings." "Did they give you any orders?" "They desired to see some dresses." "Very extraordinary; when was this pray?" "Yesterday morning, ma'am." "Very extraordinary," said Mrs. Lascelles musing. Poor Esther was afraid she was making mischief, and repeated that she did not shew them. "My good girl, if you had I should not have had the slightest objection. But I cannot understand how young women in the situation of the Misses Jennings could have any orders to give you." The matter grew visibly worse, and poor Esther fearing she was doing some one an injury, begged Mrs. Lascelles to take no notice of what she had said. The young ladies perhaps had only called for curiosity; she hoped she should not do them any injury in her good opinion by what she said; in short, every word she uttered deepened Mrs. Lascelles's view of her innocence and benevolence, and we may say she never lost that good opinion which Mrs. L. formed of her during this short interview.

As the innocent girl returned home Fanny Meredith met her: she had the tears in her eyes, and Fanny said, "Well, Esther, what's the matter?" She curtsied and replied, "Nothing of any consequence." "Oh, but my good girl, do tell me; remember you speak to a friend." "I really do believe its not of the least consequence." "You believe, you don't *know?*" "I really don't;" and she smiled through her tears. "Well, you know we women are very curious, and I must know what is the matter." The simple girl related her tale, and said she feared she had done hurt to those ladies by telling Mrs. Lascelles. "You should have asked her not to mention it." "I did, ma'am, and she promised she would not. I certainly intended no wrong, but I saw madam did not approve." "My good girl, Mrs. Lascelles feels as a mother towards us all; if you were to do wrong, if I were to do wrong, she would be grieved; but she has no anger against us, Esther. As for the Miss Jennings's, I don't think she knows much of them, for they are not religious girls; but would it ease your mind if I were to go and tell her you were grieved you had prejudiced her against them?" "Oh, yes, it would." "Well then I'll go, and do you take the little girl." Esther took the child, and waited the return of her mediating friend.

Mrs. Lascelles was crossing the hall to go up stairs when she saw Fanny through the glass door, and her condescending hand was immediately extended to open it. "Sweet lady," said Fanny to herself, "no more pride than a baby." "What were you saying, Mrs. Meredith?" "Nothing of any consequence; I was only taking the liberty to love you, Madam." "Dear, good creature, I love to be loved." "But, Madam, I'm come on very urgent business; for poor Esther is greatly afraid she has done something wrong this morning." "She has done something which has filled me with admiration of her simplicity and feeling; I never saw so much of her before, nor ever liked her half so well." "Then, Madam, will you promise me to say nothing to the Miss Jennings's of what poor Esther said to you?" "You may tell her she may rely upon me. It is a rare thing for Miss J. and I to meet, but it has so happened that I saw her father yesterday, and something that passed then led me to express surprise that Miss Jennings's should employ a mantua-maker: this is all. Pray tell poor Esther to let her heart rest." "Good morning, Madam;" and Fanny Meredith soon joined Esther and her baby.

After relating what Mrs. Lascelles had

promised; "now, Esther, let your heart rest, for you are as secure as though you had never opened your lips." "Thank you, dear, kind friend, you've been a comfort to me indeed, and so you have ever since I knew you. Was it not you who showed the baby's frock I made to Mrs. Lascelles, and who got me four shirts to make for Mr. Kemp? I never shall forget the favours you have done me." "Why, child, while you work as neatly as you have done, you never will want work; people are always glad to get their things well done, you know; and, besides, you serve the Lord, Esther, and he never suffers his people to want." "Well, good day to you, Mrs. Meredith; my mother will wonder where I've been."

Mrs. Humphries did wonder, and was really glad to see her girl return; her love for this young creature bordered on idolatry, which is not very wonderful, for she had always been very amiable, and since she had become religious, her conduct had been almost blameless. She might really be said to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour. "Well, child, and what could keep ye so long?" She related the whole to her mother, and how uneasy she had been. "Ah," said her mother, "a close tongue maketh a wise head." "Why now

ye wouldn't blame Esther for that," said Margaret, "wasn't it right the girl should ask leave of Madam; how should she know what to do if she did not?" "That is true," said Mary. "Yes it is," said Margaret; "but you have got such a way of telling the child her faults, that I think you blame her sometimes where there's no occasion." "Well, that's like enough; but then she knows I love her; don't ye, Hetty?" "Ah, mother, there's no doubt of that." "To be sure 'twas best ye should tell Madam Lascelles, who could know how she would take it." "Oh mother, don't you mistake, she didn't take it amiss; but I understand now that those ladies are not so rich, and they can't so well afford to put their clothes out, and I suppose Madam Lascelles thought it was rather extravagant to think of it, and I suppose they are friends of hers." (*Margaret, laughing,*) "Esther, child, ye have got a strange fancy to put them girls out of their places." *Mrs. H.* "Now, Margaret, that's not like you; we shall sin if we don't mind." "Well, thank ye for that good counsel; so I'll stop before I go any further. How true it is, Mary, that man is not only born to trouble, but born to sin. I'm sure when I would do right, evil is present with me."

"Margaret, do you remember, when we

were girls, how we did hate that saying we didn't think we had as much sin as that good Mr. Bartlett used to say we had. Many a time have I thought to myself, what a wicked heart that man must have, he seems always to be judging us by himself. Well, there we were wrong indeed; he was a saint if ever there was one on this earth; he was so humble that I've heard his own maid say, if he had contradicted her or said any thing at all sharp in the day he was sure to beg her pardon before he went to bed at night, and she said she used to go about almost ready to knock her head against the wall to see his humility." "Dear me, aunt, wasn't that very odd?" "Why, my dear, she was a good woman, and she had an uncommon respect for her master, and so couldn't bear that he should humble himself to her." "Well that was becoming, too, I think, aunt, was it not, because I have seen some servants who fancied their religion made them equal to their masters." "Ah, child, that's the pride of the corrupt heart, that's not true Christianity." "I don't know what pleasure people can take in going out of their station." "If that's quite true, Esther, you may thank God for it, for it is not your own nature, child, but a new nature that he has given you, so do ye be thankful, I

say." "Yes, mother, I am, I can say I do feel that, and I am quite contented in my happy station."

Thus did these good cottagers converse together, and their lives passed in simple faith and christian obedience; and which best loved Esther, the aunt or the mother, was difficult to say. There was this difference in their mode of showing it; the mother never thought it necessary to gild the truths she delivered, the aunt thought her little niece the most perfect being she had ever met; if she saw any thing particularly pretty, it was just like my Esther; if she heard of a good action, ah, that's just what my Esther would have done; if any one was bold and forward, how different is my Esther! and the mother would reply,—"If Esther Humphries is not spoiled it won't be Margaret Beal's fault."

Every morning, during Stephen's absence, Michael had wandered to the Mill to breakfast, for he said, Fanny must be lonely; she must miss that boy, I miss him myself. "How very kind this is of you, my dear brother," and she would place her little girl upon his knee while she poured out his breakfast, and the meek baby would look up in his face with a doubtful expression; this intercourse ended well, and the little girl was soon in fa-

vour with her kind uncle. But the day arrived when the travellers returned, and all things were again in their wonted channel, and the whole family group were united in the evening under the walnut-trees. "My dear brother has been so kind, he begins I believe now to like the baby." "My dear Fanny, I always liked her, as I always must like every thing connected with you, but you would not have me forsake my old friends." "Oh, by no means, I feel the happiness of my boy having such a friend," and Stephen looked on with delight. But there was that gravity and decision in Michael's character which, without designing it, always held an upper place. Stephen, though he loved him as a brother, continued to reverence him as a master, and things were in this train when the talk of the Miss Jennings's being "quite come down," as the village people called it, reached the Brow. Betty Smith came in with a look half piteous, and yet with the air of one who had foreseen the evil and thought it was no more than was to be expected, she said, "Master, have ye heard the news? "I've heard nothing particular, what news do you mean?" "About the Miss Jennings's." "No, Betty, I've heard nothing of the Miss Jennings's, at least nothing particular." "I can't say but I'm

sorry for 'em though, poor things, they hav'nt been so humble as they should have been." "Well, but Betty, what is the matter, what have you heard?" "That they are going to take in plain work, and make gowns and such like." "Well, Betty, is there anything so very unfortunate in that? depend upon it, the man or woman who is most busy, provided he is innocently busy is the happiest person." "Then, Sir, the Miss Jennings's are not of that mind; they never did like work, 'tis clean contrary to what they've been used to, they were fond of reading, Sir." "I am very glad to hear that," said her master." "Oh, Sir, I don't believe it's the sort of reading as you like; it's about great lords, how they married farmers' daughters, and how young ladies had lost their parents, as they thought, and been brought up in distress, and all at once, when nobody expected any such thing, they found their parents and such quantities of money, and those who had had nothing to help 'em were found out to be dukes and such like." "Why, Betty, you are perfectly right, this is not the reading I approve, and this is what has filled these poor young women's heads with such foolish notions." "Yes, Sir, I dare say it is, and instead of the Miss Jennings's fortunes being so grand as

the books say, they will be obliged to work like poor Esther Humphries." "Well, Betty, if this is all, I think you are throwing away your pity." "Why, Sir, it isn't exactly their being obliged to work, but, poor things! there's a good many people in this village who think but lightly of 'em, and I can't fancy as they'll have much pity in their humiliation." "That will not be to the credit of the village, Betty, and I hope Miss Jennings will have sense enough not to mind it." "'Twill be a good thing Sir, if they don't, but I should think very few young ladies would mind it more." "There is one thing I have observed, Betty, and I think it a great error, calling farmers' daughters young ladies; what could you say more of the Squire's daughters? and though I'm far from wishing to take from their respectability, I think it would add to it if every one kept to that station assigned them by Providence. As, Christians, Betty, we should render to all their due, but these exaltations are *not* due." "I'm sure, Sir, you know best, but they are always called young ladies." "They would have felt much less, Betty, if they had always kept in that place to which they were born; I can tell you that my keeping where Providence put me has been no hindrance, on the contrary, my

betters have respected me the more. But pray, Betty, who told you this news?" "I heard it at Mr. Lascelles, Sir; the servants say their mistress has been talking of nothing else for two days past but what she could do to serve Miss Jennings, and she has been having 'em up, one at a time, consulting what could be done, and the maid said if the Miss Jennings's had been her mistress's own relations she couldn't have been more anxious about them. Dear excellent lady, that's just like her!—First she thought of their keeping a little school, and now I hear she has fixed on the mantua-making, but I can't believe that, because she is so fond of Esther Humphries." "Do you know, Betty, if any particular misfortune has happened to Mr. Jennings?" "No, Sir, nothing that I do know of, except the disappointment about Mr. Joseph." "Why, I never heard you talk so foolishly; my poor brother could only have married one, and such a marriage could have been no great advantage even to *that* one. Poor things! I hope whatever their father sees right they will do willingly, for Mr. Jennings appears to me, though a blunt man, to have plain good sense. I have heard he is a fond father, but that he never indulged them so foolishly as Mrs. Jennings."

"I believe, Sir, that's quite true; mothers, you know, are apt to make much of their girls, but Mr. Jennings have done his part in setting them up; he was always very proud of their riding, Sir, and, to say true, when they did get on horseback, tall, thin girls as they were and well made too, I must own they did look creditable; dear me, why they'd join the hunt, and there was a time when it was talk'd of all over the country that their own Squire thought of making Miss Louisa the lady of the manor, and while that was the report, not one of them would speak to a neighbour if they met them, and every body said they were getting ready to ride in their coaches; I happened to go once to beg a little barm of the servant girl, and Mr. Henry muttered, while I stood there,—'Well, Miss Louisa, I shall expect the farm a good pennyworth.' Miss Louisa toss'd her head, 'Indeed! what are *we* to live upon.'"

"There's one thing, said Michael, Betty, I wish we could leave off, talking of our neighbours."

"I do assure you, Sir, I never speak of 'em but to you." "Well, Betty, we wish them no ill." "No, indeed, master; I'd go by night or by day if I could do 'em a service.

Betty passed on to her business, and

her master being anxious about sowing, strayed into the porch to look at the sunset; it was rather cloudy, and he saw some one approaching, whom, he could not clearly discern: who seemed to walk thoughtfully and leisurely, and he doubted whether he were coming to the Brow or passing. So, instead of going in, he waited, and as the person drew nearer, he heard a voice—it was James Brown.

Michael. O, James, is it you?

James. Were you at market yesterday?

Michael. No.

James. Well, I was, and I heard a piece of news there, as I think you'll be sorry for.

Michael. What was that?

James. You knew, perhaps, that Robert was come from transportation; he has not been home above two months, and now they have been making inquiry after the murderers of the old pedlar; and there is a man in that gang of gypsies that they think had a principal hand in it, and he has impeached Robert. Now, though he is an idle profligate chap, I believe he is as innocent of that murder as I am; and I thought perhaps, if I went up, I might do some good, for it is a hard thing for him to lose his life, and I wanted to consult you

how I am to go about it. I think I could prove that Robert was all the evening with me in the tent, the night that pedlar was murdered; and bad as that gang were, I do not believe there was one there that would have stained their hands.

Michael. I think you are very right, James, in your anxiety for the welfare of this poor creature. The first thing to be done, is to see Robert, and to learn from him all the particulars of the crime for which he stands charged; he is a perverse temper, and you will perhaps find it difficult to get any thing out of him—suppose I were to go with you?

James. That's the very thing I wished, and yet I did not like to ask you.

The day was fixed, and these good young men set off together on this errand of mercy. The very precincts of a prison, especially that part occupied by felons, is appalling to a virtuous mind; there, human hope seems extinguished, and certainty of the darkest kind has fixed her seat on every mind; the blank look of despair, in its varied forms, is on every countenance; the clanking of chains, and the noise of oaths and curses, assails your ear; the maniac laugh of those who brave it to the last, the sullen determined silence of others, and the unavailing contrition of a few, present a

variety of ideas to the mind: still they are all of one hue, and that deeply depressing!

When our young men reached the prison, they presented a letter from Mr. Lascelles to the chaplain; he read it, and said, "I hope you are not too late; I will do my best in this service, but it is much to be regretted you had not come here sooner."

Michael. I never heard of it till very lately, and I believe James Brown did not know it till late last week.

Chaplain. He is under sentence of death, and by what I understand of his conduct, on trial, he is a villain of a hardened kind, and when I have conversed with him there seems to be nothing like contrition, and no anxiety expressed. I question if he will thank you for your efforts.

"Sir," said Jem Brown, "we do not want thanks; think of his soul, Sir, think of his never-dying soul."

Chaplain. Very true, Sir; you will be so good as to give my compliments to Mr. Lascelles, and I wish you a very good morning.—Turn down that passage, and inquire for the turnkey.

Michael. Shall we call again at your house, Sir, for an answer to that letter?

Chaplain. Here is little to answer, Sir:

Mr. Lascelles seems to know scarce any thing of this bad man. You can inform Mr. L. (if you please) that I have called upon him in his cell, and that he is resolutely silent.

The chaplain left them, and they turned down the dark passage, and found that it terminated in a room, small indeed, with a strong door which led to the condemned cells; at this they rapped, and a sturdy boy asked what they wanted. "We want the turnkey." He appeared. "We wish to see one Robert Sawyer."

Turnkey. Is he a relation of your's?

Michael. No, Sir, he is an old fellow-servant of ours, and we thought it kind just to call upon him in his trouble.

Turnkey. Why, Sir, I don't think he'll thank you for your kindness, he is the most hardened desperate villain I ever saw.

They began to hesitate, particularly Michael, for he hated wicked persons, though his heart yearned over every soul. He turned to James, and said, "We need not stop long," and the turnkey led to the cell: he was alone, and the darkness of the place increased their horror; they could dimly perceive the form of a figure stretched on the straw. James had privately begged the turnkey not to leave them, for he was really afraid of Robert, though he had

earnestly wished to visit him. Michael began: "Robert, do you remember me, my name is Michael Kemp; and here is James Brown; and we are come to visit you, and, if possible, to give you some comfort." To this he made no reply, and Michael again endeavoured. "We are truly sorry for your situation; but I hope, Robert, that you will spend your remaining time in penitence and prayer." Robert was chewing tobacco, and he spit out of his mouth at the word penitence, but made no reply.

James Brown said, "Do you not remember us?" (This roused the sturdy villain.)

Robert. Yes, yes, I remember ye; I should never have been here, if it had not been for you. We were all happy enough in the camp till *you* came; 'twas you and that canting methodist brought me here—that parson Lascelles.

Michael. O, Robert! that is indeed very unjust; your own robberies sent you to Botany Bay, and from that time we have never heard any thing of you. But Mr. Lascelles has great concern for your soul, Robert: it is by his desire that we deliver you the following message—"Tell that poor unhappy man to turn to God with all his heart, for there is mercy for the vilest; the Lord's compassion is not slow, his ear

is not heavy, therefore he says, ' Return unto me, oh ye children. and I will return unto you." Robert remained sullenly silent; and Michael, finding there was no hope either of making him listen or speak, turned to quit the prison, giving him half a crown, which he took with the voracious eagerness of a hungry dog; and what sensations of gratitude they felt, as they quitted this deep dungeon, that they had never been left to commit sin with impunity, may be easily conceived by those who have visited such scenes of misery and distress; and how welcome did the clear blue azure of heaven appear as they passed from the dark walls. " Did you ever see a creature so altered," said Michael. " What an object has vice made of him! At first the darkness was so great, I could scarcely perceive him, and when I did see him I could scarcely remember his features—so red and bloated; and what a spirit is in him; he is a horrid creature, I never heard such oaths and curses! I hope I shall soon forget them."

James. I fear we had not patience enough; I think we might have staid a little longer.

Michael. If I had imagined that we could have done the slightest good I would have continued, but his hardness is impene-

trable, at least by us; and I really felt so very uncomfortable, having never been in such company, that I was glad to escape; though if Mr. Lascelles should think it right, I'll go again.—As they mounted their horses to return home, one of the people of the inn came out to say, that there had been inquiry made for Mr. Kemp, and orders left that he should return home as soon as possible. He was greatly alarmed, and he began to fear, he knew not what: his imagination fancied the illness of his sister, the death of her boy, and many painful things. It was his habit to ride very easily home, neither to hurry his beast nor himself; and when alone, to contemplate the goodness of God as he rode upon the green turf beside the highway; but now every thing which was distressing pressed upon him; nevertheless he recalled all the comforting texts he could think of, and repeated slowly to himself, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul! for the Lord hath regarded thee." He dwelt with firm faith upon this assurance, and passed on his way. At length he reached the Brow. "O, Sir," said Betty Smith, "I be so glad you are come; we've done all we could, but we could not save her. William and I have drenched her." If the reader has ever felt an invincible dread of some unknown calamity,

and found it nothing in comparison with his fears, he can form an idea of Michael's feelings at the word drenched; he understood immediately that it was some of the cattle, and was so relieved that he almost cried for joy. Betty Smith was greatly surprised to see her master so contented, and said, "It was the red cow, Sir; that nice creature, that Yorkshire cow, Sir." William stood at the door, hardly daring to venture in. "Come in," said Michael. "I be mighty sorry, Sir." Michael had by this time recovered from his alarm, and from his opposite feeling of delight when he found that alarm groundless, he was now in a tranquil state, prepared to hear whatever they had to communicate. He did not choose to make too light of the affair, because he had ordered William to remove the cow out of the field, that was too rich for her, and he determined to ascertain whether his order had been obeyed. "You removed the cow out of the ground when I ordered you, William?" William looked very oddly. "Master, I had a strong temptation."—"I do not understand you, William."—"I had a strong temptation to move her."—"And why did you not move her, then?"—"Oh, but I mean, master, when I saw she was bad, when I saw she would die, I thought you'd be an-

gry, I got her by the fore-legs, and as there was nobody by, I was going to bring her into the home close and so down the straw-yard, and to lay her quietly, just as if she had died there; 'but,' says I to myself, 'that would be committing two sins: the first, disobedience to master's orders; next, the hiding it to deceive him, which would be a kind of a lie; and this I can't fancy, though to be sure it could not hurt any body.'" Michael was much pleased with this instance of growing principle in William, and observed, "You see, William, how naturally one sin leads to another: it is rare to find any one stopping at the first step, and this makes the first step very important."

William. Why, master, I see that clearly, and I hope I have learned a lesson; I do think that you never shall again tell me twice to do a thing, and I'm very willing that you should stop my wages until the cow is paid for.

Michael. We will think about this, William; I must say, that in my judgment, when a servant breaks carelessly, or destroys in any way the property of his master, he has a right to make it good; and if this practice were generally followed, we should find servants far more careful and thoughtful; and even if a master chose to

return it, I think the practice of making careless people feel their own negligence would be a good one.

As Betty stood laying the cloth for her master's dinner, she asked him if he had heard that there was to be a sale at Sizors.

Michael. No indeed, Betty, and I hope it is not true.

Betty. Why, Sir, if Farmer Jennings could get his money together, his children out, he and Mrs. might do very well, and 'tis a hard thing for the poor father and mother to go on slaving to support idleness and pride; and I do believe that they would all be happier to find their own hands.

Michael. It may be so, Betty; but I suppose there would be some difficulty in placing out so large a family, but I understand they have kind friends in Mr. and Mrs. Lascelles. I am sorry that it is not in my power to be of any use; it is a great privilege to have an opportunity of being useful; to consider every human being as a member of Christ, to endeavour to show our love to him continually, in feeding the hungry, clothing the distressed, soothing the mind of the afflicted, and doing all in love to him, keeps up a spirit of the recollection of what he hath done for us, and points our hopes and wishes to that true centre.

Betty. Yes, Sir, this is all true and comfortable.

Michael. Let us endeavour to be guided by it (my faithful Betty); and except with some intention of this sort, we will speak no more of Sizors.—Betty went out, for she perceived she had gone too far, and Michael permitted the silent reproof to operate.—Let us return to P.

Mr. Walker, whose kind heart watched with care over every being in his parish, did not see with indifference the return of Joe; he judged that there must be some cause why such a brother as Michael should resign the charge he once adopted; and when, on inquiry, he found that the opening at home was likely to supply permanent employment, he asked no farther, so that Joe's indiscretions were unknown at P., and the fair character he maintained was perhaps the only thing that could have kept him steady, for the breath of human praise was life to Joseph; and we find in this, as in many other cases, even vices, in contradistinction to each other, are found to keep up outward decency, it is only the wisdom which cometh from above that is first pure.

Jane, the steady Jane was house-maid at Mr. W.'s, and as she called on her mother one morning, she said, " Mother, I

know you'll be concerned to hear what my fellow-servants told me this morning. Mrs. Potter is in a bad way, her goods are taken to ——, and she drinks so very sadly, that they think she cannot last long. They say, it is distress that has brought her to it, but I cannot understand that, mother."

Mrs. Kemp. My dear, when people do go for comfort to any but the Lord, it will be commonly found to fail them. You see this poor woman has been distressed, she has wished to forget her care, but she could not; and finding that when she took more than nature required, it made her forget sorrow, she has gone on till sin no longer sought concealment, but openly exposed her to the derision of her neighbours. It is remarkable how little pity one poor sinner has for another; I think I shall call upon her, and see if I can be any comfort to her.

Jane. Do, mother, perhaps you might persuade her to give up her bad ways.

(Elizabeth Kemp shook her head.) "In this and every case, Jane, I would say, In the Lord put I my trust."

Now Elizabeth Kemp was reflecting in her mind what might be the best means to bring about the best end. It was very long since she had seen Mrs. Potter, for she was

confined to her house by duty and inclination. It was no time to hesitate, so she went over the way, and found her as Jane had described, some people in possession, and others marking the goods for sale. Some few customers still drinking, one of them drank, "Mrs. Kemp, your health Ma'am, and your family," and then the others burst into a loud laugh. The worthy creature lifted up her heart to God for them; and was searching in vain for Mrs. Potter; when one of the legal men, seeing her decent appearance, rightly concluded that she did not belong to that house in any way, and told her Mrs. Potter was not well, and he did not know whether she was up. A decent looking servant-girl just then came in, and Mrs. Kemp sent up a message to inquire if there was any thing she could do that would be of any use; and an answer was returned, to desire her to walk up stairs.

There was, in Mrs. P.'s mind, a quality not uncommon to those who plunge themselves into difficulties by irregularity and intemperance; the slightest gleam of hope encourages inordinate expectation, and though Mrs. Potter well knew Elizabeth Kemp had little in her own power, she knew she had influence, and she determined to ask her to use it. So she received her visitor with unusual cordiality, calling her Mrs. Kemp, and begging she

would be seated. There was every appearance of plenty in the apartment, but it was neglected,—sluttish plenty, and was exactly descriptive of the true state of things. The head of the house was not in possession of her right reason scarcely any night in the week; and the morning found her languid and miserable.

"Oh, Mrs. Kemp," said she, "you see I'm come to misfortune. Who would have thought that I, who have always been a good neighbour and done my duty, should come to distress; but you are a kind creature, neighbour Kemp, and ye seem sent on purpose. If you will just step down to Mr. Walker, and give my duty to him, and say, if he would be so good as to lend me sixty pounds to pay the distiller, I should go on very well. Elizabeth Kemp was astonished! "Indeed, Mrs. Potter, I could not ask such a favour of the Reverend Mr. Walker: sixty pounds is a great deal of money, and I really do not think he would lend it you."—"Then what am I to do? I do not know that I have a friend in the world, and here all my goods are going to be sold to satisfy the creditors. I had no more notion of this, Mrs. Kemp, three days ago, no more than you have. Perhaps your son, the rich young farmer, could just step in; you know, time has been I was a friend to you, Mrs. Kemp."

Elizabeth Kemp replied, she did not forget it, and that she would very willingly return that favour doubled, but that it did not seem to be of much use. "Oh, no! people that have been in a great way like me," said Mrs. Potter, "'tisn't a few shillings will put their affairs to rights." Elizabeth Kemp was thanking God in her heart that she never had been in a great way as Mrs. Potter called it; that God had been pleased to keep her in a safe and lowly path. She began to despair of doing any good; but she proposed, if Mrs. Potter wished it, to go to the rectory and ask Mr. Walker to call on her. In reply to this offer, she said she did not know what to think; that she should not like to be schooled and teached at her time of life.

Elizabeth Kemp stood hesitating, for she really knew not what to do. Mrs. P., in the same uncertain state, at last determined. "Well, there can be no harm in just asking Mr. W. to step down." So Elizabeth set off on her neighbourly visit to the rectory. It was long since she had called there; for though she attended regularly Mr. Walker's public and private instructions, she was not, like the relations of some servants, intruding in the family where her daughter resided; but she took this opportunity of thanking the higher servants in the family, for the kind instruc-

tions they had given Jane, and for their patience with her youth and inexperience. Margaret, the head maid, said, Jane was a towardly girl; "and there's one thing I like about her, Mrs. Kemp, she has got the wit to hold her tongue; and when she sees me cross, and I don't think I'm the *best* of tempers, she never stands to argufy."

At this moment Jane came into the kitchen. "Oh, mother, nothing the matter, I hope."—"No, little maid, nothing at all; I'm only come to wait on your master, on a message from Mrs. Potter. Though nobody answered, she could hear a whisper of "Mrs. P., Mrs. P., Mrs. P.;" and Margaret came up, "Oh, I hear Mrs. Potter is in a bad case."

Mrs. Kemp. Yes, there's distress there.

Margaret (*smiling.*) Distress of her own making.

Mrs. Kemp. True, yet a public-house is a sad temptation.

Margaret. I cannot see that, Mrs. Kemp; if a public-house is well conducted, I can't see why it should not be a very decent sober place. My father kept a public-house down at Dover, and he went by the name of the Honest Man at the Crown; and when the sailors would ask for more than was good for them, he would never let them have it. The tap-room did not join the house, that was a great conve-

nience. Our house was locked up at ten o'clock, and not one drop of liquor was drawn after that hour. He sold his beer cheaper than any house in Dover, but he kept no score; and often have I been sent to a family to let them know that they had better fetch home their master on some pretence or other, and then if the customers were angry, they were sure to have some kind turn done them by my father, so that it did not last long; and my mother was a very nice cook, and when people were ill, many a little dinner would she send under a tin cover.

How useful a poor person may be if they are but disposed. Its no uncommon thing to hear the poor declare that they have no power of doing good, whereas, while they have their health and strength and spirits, no persons are more capable. The study bell rang, and Mrs. Kemp was admitted to speak to Mr. Walker. He met her with that kind and cordial consideration which he ever appeared to feel for the Kemp family. "I'm glad to see you looking so well; how is your husband, your children, your good son, Michael?" "All well, Sir, many thanks to you." "And what may be your present business with me?" "I hardly know, Sir, how to tell you; but I think I had better mention all that has been said to me. I went this morn-

ing to call on Mrs. Potter at the Lion, because I heard she was in some distress, and you remember, Sir, she was once so good as to lend me five shillings, and it was doing me a very kind turn, and I do not wish to forget it, and she now is in great distress, and the only way I can help her is to name it to you; but she wants so much more than I can do for her, that it is quite out of my power to do her any other service. She wants to borrow money, Sir, and you well know I have none to lend, she talks of sixty pounds."

Mr. W. (smiling.) For my part, my good woman, I would sooner give sixty pounds to put a public house down, than to set it up again. You may tell Mrs. Potter I'll call on her; but lest she should suppose I am coming with the money, you may tell her that I have no present sum in my disposal.

Mrs. Kemp departed on her unwelcome errand, and Mrs. P. received her, as might be expected. She had heard a great deal of the reverend's charities, for her part she had never tried him before, and now it was a clear case, he had no mind to show her favour. Well, a friend in need is a friend indeed. I'm the less obliged to him. I can't cant and whine and talk about what I do not understand, that is the way to the reverend's

heart I suppose. And now forgetting her sorrow in her spleen, "I suppose, Mrs. Kemp, you've had some pleasant talk this morning. I dare say the reverend said, I had brought my misfortunes upon myself. No, no, taxes and tithes and supervisors, oh, its enough to ruin any body." All this time poor Mrs. Kemp was standing in a fidgetty uneasiness, not knowing whether to go or to stay, the maid came in for her mistress's keys.

Mrs. Potter. My keys indeed, what before I'm dead?

Maid. Yes, Ma'am, the man says he must have them.

"What, is he going to pull all my papers about, and nobody knows how, please to give my service, and I should wish to keep my own keys." Here E. Kemp's natural good sense and kindness of heart induced her to offer her advice, "I think, Mrs. Potter, you had better let him have them; I think he can demand them by law, and perhaps it might make him uncivil." "Oh, its an easy matter for you, Mrs. Kemp, who don't know what it is to have affairs of consequence to lock up; it is an easy thing for you, I say, to talk of giving up keys; but my papers, all my accounts, all my private letters. My poor dear Mr. Potter's that is dead and gone." (Here Elizabeth Kemp looked involuntarily,

Mr. Potter was a common ostler, and could neither read nor write.) Mrs. Potter understood the look, and it increased her spleen; and she said, "people that could do no good, might as well take themselves away, and that for her part, she was sick of the world, more especially religious people; she had never had much to do with them, she pretty well knew what they were before she tried them!"

Poor Elizabeth Kemp was just departing as the maid returned, ushering in Mr. Walker. Mrs. Potter's face was become the prominent seat of envy and ill-temper, and she could not alter her countenance in a moment, this glance was useful to Mr. W., as it showed him the tone in which she ought to be addressed, "Well, Madam, I am come to offer you any advice in my power, and if I can be of any use to you, though I do not offer you money, still, I shall most gladly serve you in any other way, especially if you mean to give up this house, for we have too many public houses in this village, and though they are not open on Sundays, yet persons are admitted, and while that is the case, the reformation of the poor is greatly impeded. Well, now, Mrs. Potter, what are your future plans?" "My plan, Sir," said Mrs. P. tossing her head, "is to pay Mr. Poole the distiller, if I could have got

the money." "Well, Madam, if you can, you are certainly the best judge of your own affairs; as the clergyman of this village, it is my duty to visit every one in distress, for distress sometimes brings thought and inquiry." Mrs. P. replied, "that as for thought, she had always had plenty of that, nobody could say but she'd always been thoughtful and careful." "I was going to say, Mrs. Potter," said Mr. Walker, "how very thoughtless and how very careless you have always been, you have lived without God in the world; I have never seen you at the church above twice since I married you; and with regard to the distiller's bill, I acquit my conscience, in saying, *you* have had but too large a share in it. No, stop, I am going on as your pastor. I am vested with authority from a power you have hitherto despised, but observe me, though unseen, he is irresistible; and I warn you, that your present course of life will not end in temporal ruin, it is full of eternal danger. I'm told by those who well know your habits, that you're rarely to be spoken with after three o'clock in the day, this is sad work, but he who commissions me to warn you, commissions me to encourage you if you break off your sins by right-

eousness, and your iniquities by calling upon your God."

Mrs. P.'s patience had been sorely tried, she was endeavouring to speak repeatedly, but Mr. W. kept his post firm, and his eye fixed, and never ceased till he had ended all he meant to say, and then the storm broke out. "Was this the way that one Christian should speak to another? Was this the way to comfort people in their affliction? For her part, she never had much notion of the Methodists, she never had asked any favours of them, she never did expect much from them, and blessed was them as expected nothing, they should not be disappointed." She ran on in a long stream of abuse. Mr. Walker stood the pelting of the storm like a fine old castle, whose buttresses stand firm, unshaken by the blast; the howling of the winds and the fury of the tempest passes by, and it stands against the smiling sky in reverend majesty: so waited Mr. Walker, till Mrs. Potter's fury spent, a shower of tears, and a sort of hysterical scream subsided into sobs and moanings; still patient, he waited till her passion being entirely exhausted, she sat like a froward child, not knowing what to do, or what to say.

He still continued to look with a kind-

ness of heart, and something like hope, which arose from this cause, that she appeared, now the heat of passion was over, ashamed and uneasy. He said, "Well, Madam, have you any plan? are you determined to remain here?" Mrs. P. replied, "that she did not know what she should do, that she had no money, and that though she had some debts owing to her, and a pretty deal too, considering she was in but a moderate way of business, and did not commonly lodge people, that she was noted for cookery, and if she could but once be established again, her ordinary would be the best in P———."

Mr. W. remained silent, he was determined if he could not put the house down, he would not assist to continue it. Poor E. Kemp had stood looking out of the window for some time. She could not offer to go, lest it should look unkind, and yet knew not any thing that she could do or say. At length turning round, "Mrs. Potter, Ma'am, if you want any thing that I can do, if you'll be so good to send to me, I will wait upon you directly." "Thank you, Elizabeth Kemp, if I should go away, I shall want help in packing a little, and may be you could assist me in that?" "Oh, I don't doubt but I could, Ma'am," and Elizabeth, with

a respectful good morning to Mr. W., withdrew.

It was Mr. W.'s presence alone that had restrained the people from again demanding the keys, and when they saw him passing through the house, the person who was put in possession, came up to him, "Sir, it's not my wish to be hard-hearted when people are in misfortunes; but its very provoking to be stopped in the way of one's duty by ignorance and foolish obstinacy; we cannot get the keys from the lady above stairs, you know, Sir, this is law?" "Yes, I do;" he stepped back again, and tapping at the door, "Mrs. Potter, it is a customary form to give up your keys at such times as these, and your resisting it will only plunge you in deeper inconvenience, give them to me and I will stand by while your desk is examined, and bring you them again when the search is over."

Who would suppose that after all this resistance, that when the desk was laid open, it should contain nothing of value. The first thing was an old cap with the caul nearly burnt out, and a piece of front hair pinned to it, some bits of soap, two or three snaffles of thread, a bottle of hartshorn, four or five old stockings, a few sheets of paper, and some old pens, a

cookery book without a cover, very greasy and dirty; and in different parts of the desk, several bills without receipts, two or three old torn letters, a few wafers, four or five lottery tickets; three or four pair of old ear-rings in a snuff-box; a watchcase and an old chain, some curtain rings, a hammer, and a few rusty keys; a housewife, with scarcely any article of use in it, a pair of scissors, and a pair of sugar-nippers, some scales for weighing, quite out of repair, and the weights throwing about the desk, a broken tea-spoon, and a pair of snuffers; there was a well in the desk, which went with a spring, and here the man expected to find some treasure, but indeed such a confusion as here presented itself, is beyond my powers of description; a mixture of every sort of rag, corn plaister in abundance, matches, old lavender water bottles, a broken small tooth comb; and now came a packet of papers tied up, these were opened, there were three or four letters, written in characters as unintelligible as Egyptian records, many bills, an old pocket book, very greasy and dirty, when opened, it was found to contain several pieces of hair, and rolled up in one corner were two five pound notes, which it is supposed the poor

lady, in the frequency of her intoxication, had totally forgotten.

All the bills were collected, and the amount was very trifling; Mr. Walker, whose soul was under the law of kindness, stood with his pencil in his hand, "Well, Sir, and what do you suppose the debts may amount to?" "Why, Sir, I do not think so much as was thought at first; Mrs. Potter has not been an extravagant woman, nor was she given to drinking, till she had that disappointment about her uncle's will." "What was that?" "Why, Sir, did you never hear?" "No, never." "Well, then, I must tell you, she is right heir to more than twenty thousand pounds." "Indeed!" "Yes, indeed! a housekeeper that lived with the old gentleman, (he was a tobacconist in London,) got the will made again all in favour of her relations; and poor Mrs. Potter happening to call on her uncle on his dying bed rather too much dressed, he felt assured his money would all be spent foolishly, and he would hearken to none but this artful old housekeeper; but if Mrs. Potter had money for law, I think she might get her right, for the lawyer that made the will did not like it, and kept saying, but, Sir, you have a niece; she

don't want it, Sir, said he, she don't want it, this is my last will." Mr. Walker paused, "You are sure this statement is quite correct?" "I tell it you just as I heard it, and I think they as told me, knew pretty well the truth of the case." *Mr. W.* "Well, Sir, now I suppose I may deliver these keys to the lady above stairs?" "Oh yes, Sir."

"Well, Madam," said Mr. W. as he entered, "here are your keys, and if you have any money anywhere, it seems that your affairs are not in so very bad a state, but that you might get them settled comfortably." "Sir, that's what I say; I know I don't owe any body but the distiller, and some trifles beside." "Now really, Mrs. Potter, I wish to speak to you as one of my flock; if your affairs could be decently settled, and you could go into a small house and live as a prudent woman should, out of the way of spirituous liquors, you might lose these bad habits, and become a valuable member of this place." Mrs. Potter said, "she had no money to pay the distiller, and that she must go on in the way of life that she had been bred to," and her reverend friend withdrew, finding all attempts only fixed her more firmly in the design of staying.

But he could not help reflecting on what he had heard, and such was his love of justice, that he would gladly have spent something of his own private fortune to have reinstated Mrs. Potter. But the affair seemed hopeless, it was so long since the death of the uncle.

When he sat down to converse with Mrs. Walker, she was of opinion that something might be done. "My love," said she, "if we could get this foolish woman into a private house, much that is now wrong would probably be corrected: do let us try. I should think there are many professional men who would have pleasure in helping such a case."

Mr. W. Without money, Sophia?

Mrs. W. (*laughing*) Not without the hope of money.

Mr. W. Well, my dear, can you find any one who will with the hope of money undertake Mrs. Potter's cause?

Mrs. W. I think I can.

Mr. W. Well, you must hold high councils with Mrs. Potter. But I would do nothing till I had cured her of her propensities; if you do, you only furnish her with an opportunity of more effectually destroying her constitution: and, besides, let me tell you, I think conscience the best lawyer:

and as I'm going to London next week, if Mrs. P. could furnish me with this woman's address, I would pay her a visit, and take Protheroe with me, he might use a few fine law terms, and without spending any money we might bring her to do justice.

Mrs. W. This is an excellent plot. I should exceedingly enjoy such a scene.

We will pass the interview between Mrs Walker and Mrs. Potter, and touch only what is material to the history—the friendly offices of the good Rector of P.

Mrs. Tucker, the tobacconist's housekeeper, was quietly established at a neat little highway-side villa at Walworth, where the stage could take her up and put her down at her own door; and a few mornings after his arrival in London, the friend of the oppressed widow rang at the neat gate of a small house. A little girl came to it. "Is Mrs. Tucker at home?"—"Sir?" "Is Mrs. Tucker at home?" A grave old citizen, who was standing at his door, came out, in a well-mended bannian and a velvet cap, and bowing very respectfully to Mr. Walker and Mr. Protheroe Walker, asked for whom they inquired.—"For Mrs. Tucker, Sir."—"You are at the wrong number; it is No. 1, not 21, you should have called at. But if you will just step in while I slip off my morning dress (look-

ing archly at his gown), I will lead you to the lady you seek."—" Thank you, Sir. Will you be so very obliging as to give me your name?" " My name, Sir, is Brownrigg; and (looking up at Mr. Walker) perhaps——and ere he continued Mr. W. said " Mine is Walker, and this is my nephew, Mr. Protheroe Walker of Lincoln's Inn."

Mr. Brownrigg buttoned himself up tight as though he would have shunned all intercourse with a lawyer, and seemed about to settle into a reserve which was very unlike his first cordiality; but his curiosity was too much for him; and while he looked for his cane and his well-mended gloves, and put the guard on his fire, and hung up his kettle-holder, and locked his bright bureau, he hemmed and coughed, and at last " You have business with Mrs. Tucker, Mr. Walker?"—" Yes, Sir. You know Mrs. Tucker?"—" Yes, Sir, I have known her many years."—" She is a respectable woman, is she not?" said Mr. Walker. " Yes, Sir, a very decent, respectable woman."—" She is rich, I believe?"—" Why, Sir, all riches are comparative, you know: I am called a rich man because I live upon my means, and can say I owe no man any thing; and yet, Sir, if you look at my opposite neighbour, he is richer still. There, Sir, you see his footman has banged to

the carriage-door—and there go his prancing horses. Why, now, I remember when that man swept his own shop. He is an honest fellow—he has got on by fair trading—he has brought up a large family very decently—no man envies him—he never refused a good turn in his life—he is an honest man, Sir; that man's an honest man——But I keep you waiting, gentlemen, I am quite ready," and he was leading the way to the passage, "but, gentlemen," said he, hesitating, "I should be very sorry to do a neighbour an ill turn; I hope there is no harm intended to Mrs. Tucker?"—"Sir," said Mr. Walker, "if Mrs. Tucker has done no wrong, she is safe; and if she has done wrong, I am sure you are too much a gentleman and a man of honour"—and here Mr. Brownrigg laughed—"I say, Sir, you are too much a gentleman," repeated Mr. Walker, "to enlist on the wrong side."

Mr. Protheroe Walker looked at his uncle as though he would have said, softly, softly. Mr. Brownrigg had the door in his hand at this moment, but he closed it again. "Gentlemen, will you step back a minute—will you sit down?" Mr. Protheroe Walker said, "Certainly, Sir," and stept back with him immediately. "You seem to know our business?" The wary

Mr. Brownrigg bowed; "You come from the village of P——, I presume, Sir; you come from Mrs. Potter, Sir?" "I do not come from Mrs. Potter, Sir; I never saw her; but that gentleman, (looking at Mr. Walker,) that gentleman knows Mrs. Potter certainly: and now, Sir, for I hate mysteries, I wish a sight of the late Mr. Wilson's will."—"So I thought," said Mr Brownrigg, putting his finger very knowingly to the side of his nose; "and I must say, Sir, I think the friends of Mrs. Potter have a right to this satisfaction."—"As the minister of the parish, Sir, I consider myself the friend of every being in it."—"Excellent, Sir, excellent; that's just what I think every parson should do, though I can't say, Sir, its exactly what they do do." "But now to the point," said Mr. Walker, breaking through his unwilling restraint, "how was it that Mr. Wilson died without leaving a shilling to his nearest relation? Do you think it was all fair play, Sir?"

Mr. B. Sir, I knew Mr. Wilson as well as I knew my own brother, and if his niece had gone on to his liking, he would never have overlooked her; but, Sir, she was an extravagant woman.

Mr. W. I believe not, Sir.

Mr. B. Well, Sir, I have heard her uncle say so. He worked for every shilling of

money he had, and Mrs. Tucker, his old housekeeper, helped him to save it. Mrs. Potter used to come to town now and then, and give herself great airs, and treat the poor old hard working woman as if she was not worthy to wipe her shoes. You may well think this was not very pleasant, and her uncle was more affronted at it than Mrs. Tucker herself: he gave her no warning, but he often said to me, 'Ah, she'll smart for it one day.' I do not believe my neighbour ever went out of her way to do Mrs. Potter an injury; but she could not be blamed for taking what her master gave her.

Mr. W. No, if she used no undue means to obtain it.

Mr. Brownrigg assured them he believed that Mrs. Tucker was innocent of that wrong, and could not be accused of one dishonest or unfair action. The Uncle and Nephew look'd at each other and seemed ready to give up farther inquiry, but as Mrs. Potter was in distress he thought the old housekeeper might be prevailed on to do an act of justice, or rather of kindness, and after musing a little, he said, "By the by, Sir, in what did the late Mr. Wilson's property lie? was he a stock-holder, a landed proprietor, or——" "I believe, Sir, he had no money in the funds at all;

he rose in the world by very honest industry; he went on from £10 to 20, and traded till it doubled, and so added to his stock; as he increased his capital he brought up several boys and set them up in business, and took fair interest for his money. He had several houses in Smithfield and a very good house in Tower-street, he had a nursery garden at Chelsea which paid him very well; and it would be a difficult matter for any one to get hold of his property without Mrs. Tucker would tell where it lay, for she collected his money for many years, and, I believe, never wrong'd him; and I am sure not a tenant he had but respected her and would be grieved she should lose: and as for the boys he set up, why she has been a mother to them, work'd for them; and scarce a Sunday but some of them come down to see her." Mr. Protheroe Walker looked arch,—"that may not be time thrown away."—"So the world say, but I think all Mrs. Tucker's affairs are settled; she has some good advisers, and, as I said, I do not think she cares to do any thing that is not right. You will be so good as to remember, Sir, she has had a good deal to bear from Mrs. Potter; when she came to London, this decent, respectable woman was never suffered to sit down to table with her, though

one table always served her and her master, and, to say truth, she was the genteeler person of the two; but this pert lady, when she came up to visit her uncle, even bought a bell (for her uncle did not sport such a thing) on purpose to ring in Mrs. Tucker. This gave a deadly blow, Mr. Wilson never got over it; a woman of her years, one who was in all his confidence, who had served him so long and so faithfully, to be insulted by such an upstart, such a whiff of tobacco!—it was monstrous, it shall never be again; No! No! let her give herself airs among her stable boys, she shall not do it here; and I believe the old man never saw her after; there was some talk of sending for her, but Mr. W. said he would not be disturbed. Two of his old apprentices used to sit up with him every night, and I really believe there is something left to them, but that I cannot say. But now, gentlemen, if you please we will walk;"—and he called up his little maid, "Peggy, you mind and lock the gate to keep out the vagrants, and when the man at the Bell brings the newspaper, you tell him to take it to Mr. Bowyers first, and I'll have the next hour; and when the fishman comes,—" and here he finished buttoning his coat, and spoke low to Peggy.

They sallied out together, and the turn

in the road brought them to houses a little lower than those they had left, and at the first of these Mr. B. stopped. 'Twas a very pretty garden, in one blush of early flower, every thing about it was neat; there was a small porch, three steps down, under it to the kitchen. "Well, Sarah, is your mistress at home?" said the upright Mr. B. to a little head that peeped. "Yes, Sir;" and the little maid had just time to run in and let her mistress know that there was company, before she opened the door. It was quickly opened, so quickly that it was easy to perceive Mrs. Tucker making her escape, with her long grey hair over her shoulders, without a cap; Mr. B. could not repress a smile. They walked into the parlour; on the back of a chair hung a little cloth mob and a bit of curl'd black ribbon; and in two minutes Sarah opened the door to fetch out the article. In the interval between her exit and her mistress's entrance we will look round the room and see its furniture. Over the chimney-piece an old-fashioned chimney-glass, with two brass sconces, four coffee-cups and saucers, a little china pot for flowers, a small teakettle on the hob, a little tin pot, a high-back chair, such as Cowper says 'an alderman of Cripplegate contrived;' four rush-bottomed chairs, a very tall

book-case and desk through whose glass-doors you might see two plated candlesticks, a few silver spoons, eight or nine well-worn books, some table linen, some wine-glasses, two or three curious twisted pipes, a snuff-box, a leaden tobacco-box and many other minuter articles; the scotch carpet had been well worn and well darned, and wherever the foot was likely to tread frequently was a little bit of canvass; but every thing bore the marks of the most exquisite neatness, and her flowers bloomed in rich beauty in both the windows; the several tables about the apartment shone beautifully. A little gentle pit-pat step told the approach of Mrs. Tucker; her little fresh-coloured face bloomed higher as she looked inquiringly at Mr. Walker and his nephew. Mr. B. had been standing upright with his hands behind him, and he put out one to his neighbour,—"Good morning, Mrs. Tucker." She returned the salute with cordiality, and Mr. Walker, from all he had heard and all he saw, began to be sorry that he had enlisted in such a cause.

Mr. W. We have called on you, madam, from Mrs. Potter of P——; she thinks herself hardly done by that she should receive nothing from her late uncle's effects.

Mrs. T. Nothing, Sir! I paid her £200,

which I said her uncle left her for mourning; because I wished not to have any thing to do with her.

Mr. W. But, madam, Mrs. Potter is the late Mr. Wilson's nearest relative, and she intends entering a *caveat* against the last disposition of his effects; did you administer?

Mrs. T. Yes, Sir, I did, and did every thing regularly; I was left sole executrix, and residuary legatee; and the will was regularly signed, sealed, and delivered in the presence of three witnesses.

Mr. P. Walker rose from his chair, his uncle continued sitting.—" Well, madam, and this £200 is all Mrs. Potter is to receive from the large effects of her uncle?" Mrs. Tucker said it was £200 more than her uncle left, for he, truly speaking, left her nothing; he did not like her behaviour, and he never liked her employment; she was brought up a mantua-maker, but she liked better to be idling about the inn-yard, and her uncle said he did not think it was a decent life for a young woman, and that his money should never go there. " Had Mr. Wilson no other relatives, madam?" " I believe not, Sir." " Well, madam, Mrs. Potter is now in great distress, and you have more money than you know what to do with." Mrs. T. shook her head; she

said, if she thought Mrs. Potter was really in distress by any misfortune she would not stand against assisting her, but as to giving any part of the property to Mrs. P. as a right she never would do it. "Perhaps, madam," said Mr. Walker, "you will give her the same sum that you have already given." "No, Sir, I don't think I shall; all the property lies in yearly rents, and it's a sum I could not raise at once without asking favours. Pray, Sir, what has brought Mrs. Potter into distress? when she used to visit her uncle she spent money profusely, and I believe that was one reason, among many others, why Mr. Wilson passed her by. Her want of respect, Sir, to those older than herself was another mortal offence; she would frequently tell her uncle, 'he was past knowing,' and however far we may be advanced, we do not like such very plain dealing." "Well, madam, we must endeavour to forget the past, and when I tell you that there is an execution in the house of your master's niece, perhaps you may be disposed to show her some kindness for his sake." "Why, Sir, if there is real distress and I had it in my power to help her, though she has never treated me with common decency, I can say that I was always kind-hearted, and

I'm sure I would not refuse kindness here." "I suppose, madam," said Mr. W., "that Mrs. Potter wished to make a show when she came to London, but in her native village she has not the reputation of extravagance." Mrs. Tucker said she should think it going against her master's will to set up Mrs. Potter in a public-house, it was always a great offence to him. "Perhaps, neighbour," said Mr. Brownrigg, "you might send her £20." Mrs. Tucker's good-natured eyes twinkled,—"Yes I might, to be sure, but what is it to do, Sir?"

Mr. W. It is to pay the distiller.

Mrs. T. No, Sir, I shall not do that; I have heard that Mrs. P. drinks a good deal herself, and whatever my master would have done, if he was alive, as near as I can, I'll do the same. You know, Mr. Brownrigg, I have never lived extravagant; I never kept any girl but Sarah, and there is nothing here that's wasted I can assure you. I think Mrs. P. had better be a bankrupt and begin life again, and when she's out of that house, if you'll let me know what will serve for a decent maintenance, I shall try to remember that she is akin to my poor dear master.

Mr. W. And, madam, instead of buying more land, and adding house to house and

field to field, you'll give a little of your surplus towards maintaining the niece of your master.

Mrs. T. Why, Sir, as for surplus, I never have bought a field or a house since my master died; he had his own plans, and there always was a blessing would follow his money, and I've gone on in the same way, Sir, helping the fair trader.

Mr. W. Madam, we ought to apologize for taking up so much of your time; what will you allow us to say to Mrs. Potter?

Mrs. T. Nothing from me, Sir, I never will have any thing to do with her; It's an old saying, 'a burnt child dreads the fire,' and I'm sure she's been my dread many, many years; she's an unhappy, discontented woman, and I could never find a good reason, I think, for putting my head in the lion's den. You seem, Sir, to be a friend to Mrs. Potter?

Here Protheroe Walker's quick eye glanced upon Mrs. T., and she felt the look; it seemed to say, 'my uncle, my venerable, excellent uncle, a friend to such a woman as this!' Mrs. T. felt this application as sensibly as though it had been audible, and she said, "I ask pardon, Sir, what would you wish me to do?" (and she opened a drawer in a table and took out a

bunch of keys, and putting on her spectacles, she turned over the keys one by one.) Mr. Walker, with his usual mildness and look of benevolence, replied that it was entirely unknown to Mrs. P. that he had called, that he should be obliged to Mrs. Tucker to show him the will of the deceased. "Sir, the probate is with a cousin of mine, a Mr. Wood, but you know you can read it for a shilling in the commons." *Mr. W.* "I consider every being in my parish as entitled to a portion of my attention, but I think my friendship for Mrs. Potter goes no further." And here Protheroe walked to the window and stretched himself to his full height, and seemed impatient to be gone; all this while Mrs. Tucker was turning over the keys as though she seemed uncertain which belonged to her desk, and the friendly Mr. Brownrigg, whose good sense had kept him silent, now came forward;--"My good Mrs. Tucker, had you not better tell this gentleman, who is the rector of P., and only the friend of the distressed, —had you not better tell him what you will do at once?" "Neighbour, you do know what I have suffered from that pert tongue of Mrs. Potter's, I never knew a minute's peace when she was in my master's house." Mr. B. said he knew this was very true. "Well, then, can you expect me to begin ac-

quaintance again? no, I do assure you that's what I sha'n't do." Mr. B. said, "I do not blame you. Could not I be of some use, Sir?" said he, turning to Mr. Walker, "I'm a very leisure man, and it would be a good turn to give me a job: suppose I undertake it, Mrs. Tucker?"

All this time Mr. Walker sat mildly, Protheroe fidgetted, and Mrs. T. kept colouring and shaking her little round head, and the tears found their way to her eyes as she thought of her past sorrows. "Well, Mr. Brownrigg, if you can secure me never to fix my eyes upon Mrs. Potter's face again——" (and she got up and went to her desk, and took out a twenty-pound-note)—"you shall have that sum every half-year. But, Sir," said she, turning to Mr. W., "I'm an old woman, and these flurries do me a deal of harm." Here Protheroe pulled out his watch, he said, "Uncle, I have an appointment at two, and it's now twelve." Mr. Brownrigg said, "I'll undertake it Mrs. Tucker; Sir, I'll undertake it." Mr. W. smiled benevolently, walked to the fire-place, put his hand to his forehead, and then turning round and bowing to Mrs. Tucker, "Madam, I think your offer a very generous one; I shall look at the will as you suggest, and I will communicate with Mr. Brownrigg, and as far

as my power goes you shall be secure from the visits of Mrs. Potter. We had better, I think, let matters go on as they are at present, and if she takes a small house in my village, your annual allowance will enable her to live comfortably, and," turning to Mr. Brownrigg, "if, Sir, as you're a leisure man, you have a mind to come to the village of P—— I shall have a bed at your service."

Mrs. Tucker's eyes began to glisten at the prospect of their departure, and she stood smoothing down her apron, carefully putting up her spectacles, and holding the £20 ready for any one who chose to take it. Mr. B. put out his hand, took the note, and wrote down in his tablets, 'I have, this 25th day of May, received of Mrs. Tucker £20 Bank of England, for the use of Mrs. Potter of P——.

JONATHAN BROWNRIGG.'

He tore out the leaf, "there, neighbour, that's your security against my spending the money." Mrs. T. gave him two gentle pats with her little fat hand and shook her head laughing; "Ah, Mr. B., I'm not afraid of you;" and they departed. They walked together till they were again at the door of Mr. B., and Peggy was unlocking the gate, for she had been on the watch for her master. The two Mr. W.'s were

making their bows; but good Mr. Brownrigg insisted they should come in, and Mr. W. having a word or two with his new agent, assented, notwithstanding Protheroe kept pressing him to remember his appointment at two. However, when they entered the parlour, they found that their provident friend, Mr. B. had a sufficient provision of oysters, French rolls, fresh butter, porter, red and white wine, on his little side-board; in fine, every thing that thoughtful hospitality could provide at so short a notice. They had really talked themselves hungry; and, though Protheroe had an appointment at two o'clock, he did ample justice to the good cheer before him.

"Sir," said Mr. Brownrigg, "you were so good as to say, that if I came into the country, you would have a bed for me. Now, I really had some thought of going next summer; and last summer, I thought it should be this summer; and this summer, I put it off till next; but I really mean to go; for I'm hunting after a sister of mine, who, to say the truth, is a very good kind of body, only she would not marry to my liking." Mr. Walker smiled, and looked benevolent. "Sir, I was very angry with her; but I believe, that's twenty-five years ago, and I don't feel quite so angry now as I

did then. Indeed, I had two sisters; but one was a good deal older than I am, and she did as she pleased before I grew up. Well, Sir, I came up to London, and sent for my youngest sister, and I fully meant to have done something pretty for her; but she fell in love, as the girls call it; and then I told her, if she liked her own way better than mine, it was her own affair. She certainly had a right to choose a husband for herself, but she had no right to give me a brother-in-law that I did not like, and so ended our acquaintance. But, here's a man in our neighbourhood bringing up a parcel of his sisters' children, and his wife seems as happy coddling these young ducks, as though they were her own chickens; and the thought struck me, how do I know but I've got a parcel of nephews and nieces. And, though I don't know what has happened to either of them for the last fifteen years, I thought I would inquire, and, if I liked the sample, why, who could say but I might do handsomely for one or two of them. You seem a man of kindness, Sir, and justice, what do you think of it?" "Why, Sir, I think it an excellent plan. I have only one objection to a part of your proposals." "Pray, speak your mind Sir; for I think I could almost be guided by you, and that's

a great thing for Jonathan Brownrigg, to say." "Sir, I think life so very uncertain, that I would not put off that for to-morrow, which I could do to-day; what's to hinder you to go this summer?" "Why, I've some thoughts of shifting my stock, and I must be upon the spot to do it. I was thinking of getting all my money into one stock, that there may be no confusion when I'm gone; and then, I thought these children of my sister will surely inherit. I might as well know them, and have the credit of giving away my own property, or at least tell them where it lies. After all, I must think my sister has a kindness for me. I was very kind to her, till she turned disobedient, and would do as she would." "And pray, Sir, in what part of the country may your friends live?" "Why, that I really cannot say, till I make enquiry. Last summer, I traced my youngest sister a part of the way, pretty near London; then I found she was gone in a westerly direction, nearly ninety miles from London. My curiosity did not hold out so far as that." *Mr. W.* My good Sir, when you are in a stage-coach, you may as well go ninety miles as twenty."— "Well; and if I can manage my business this July, it would not be worth while to lose my dividends, I must wait and take them."

Mr. W. said, "I believe, Sir, it is allowed, when the public funds are shifted." "Well, perhaps they may; but I can do nothing in a hurry; Jonathan Brownrigg never did any thing in a hurry." Protheroe Walker just drank his last glass and said, "I believe, Sir, I must do something in a hurry, or I shall be too late; so he gave Mr. B. his hand, who took it very cordially, making his best city bow; and they parted, mutually pleased with each other. They had but just got out of the gate, when Mr. B. remembered that he held the £20. He stepped back, took his hat and stick, and with long strides soon overtook them; and, pulling out his pocket-book, "Pray, Sir, take this, and promise if I come to P——, to introduce me to the redoubtable Mrs. Potter." Mr. Walker smiled. "I thought, Sir, you were already acquainted." "No; I have heard of her; and heard so much that I always kept clear of the coast while she was upon it." *Mr. Walker.* "I cannot blame you; good morning."

On Mr. Walker's return to P——, he requested his good lady to see Mrs. Potter, and to understand in what train her affairs were; and to drop no hint of the money, till she could learn, whether the affairs might not be settled without it; because it was going exactly

contrary to the wishes of the donor, to let it go to the distiller; and, it was a fixed maxim of Mr. Walker, to uphold no sin either directly or indirectly. When Mrs. Walker arrived, she found Mrs. Potter down stairs, bustling about, as though nothing had happened. She began, before this kind-hearted lady could approach. "I have found a friend," said she. "The brewer says, while I continue to take beer of him, he'll see what can be done; and there's to be a pleasant meeting to-night, of all the creditors; and, if the distiller would but come in, there'd be an end of all this confusion. I dare say it will take me a week to have this house cleaned up, after all the bustle that has been here." Mrs. W. saw very clearly, that a public-house was what Mrs. Potter preferred; and, that all Mr. W.'s kindness would be thrown away, if she could but accommodate the distiller. So she only said, "Well, madam, I see your affairs are arranged; and, if it's for your happiness, I am sure we shall all rejoice in it." Mrs. P. said, "No doubt, it was for her happiness; it was the way of living she had been used to, and she should find any other very dull. I think," said she, "there's something so benevolent in providing for such a parcel of people, and making them all happy."

Mrs. W. "Well, Mrs. P. I never had that idea of a public-house before; but it is well indeed, that some one is found who will think of the traveller; but, let me advise you, as soon as you have a sufficiency, to think of a retreat." "Retreat, indeed, madam; what am I to retreat upon?"

This unprofitable sort of dialogue, determined Mrs. Walker not to say a single word; when she was at once put off her guard, by the loquacious and keen landlady. She kept thinking to herself. "Well; Mr. W. has been to town; he is a meddling kind of man: I should not wonder if he had been and seen my uncle's old housekeeper, and perhaps he has got some money for me; for, to be sure, if I had the heart to go to law with her; if I could but pluck up a spirit; but I was always too meek." All this, uttered in a sort of soliloquy, while Mrs. W. was adjusting her veil, and tying one of her shoes. "And so, Madam, I suppose you've something to say to me concerning my property; perhaps the old housekeeper's conscience is worked up at last." "Why, indeed," said Mrs. W. (and she made a pause, remembering that her husband had desired her to communicate conditionally). "Oh, then," said Mrs. P. "Mr. Walker has seen Mrs. Tucker, has he,

Madam?" This excellent lady was exceedingly vexed at her own want of management, and she resolved to repair the mischief she had done, by giving a true and yet disagreeable statement, which she knew would send the inflammable Mrs. P. at a distance from that scent which she wished to conceal. "Mr. W. did see a person in London, who knew her; he told them your present distresses; they spoke highly of your uncle's housekeeper, and said, that she was a woman of excellent principles, and a great comfort to her late master." (*Mrs. Potter.*) "Oh, ma'am, she was an excellent nurse; she nursed every thing; she nursed his feet and hands in the gout, ma'am; she nursed the money in his pocket; and after his death, ma'am, she nursed herself into the good opinion of every body." "Your uncle was a bachelor, I think." "Oh, yes, ma'am; and pray, ma'am, if I may make so bold," said Mrs. P., "who is so very well acquainted with my uncle, and his old housekeeper?" "What Mr. W. heard, Mrs. P., was quite accidental; and, as you are not in want, there will be no occasion for further exertions." "I have not said, ma'am, that I had no want. I shall be obliged to borrow money of my brewer, to pay my distiller; and perhaps, as I say, I may drink sour beer all next summer, to make the distiller look

sweet at me." This was quite enough for Mrs. W.; she coolly said, "Good morning;" and returned to the Rectory.

Though entirely remote from pride, there was a settled dignity in this lady, and she never advanced to familiarity with such characters as Mrs. Potter; so for the present, the £20 note remained in the keeping of Mr. Walker.

"I do not think, my love, you have managed this matter well," said her good man, when she related the adventure of the morning. "You are perfectly right; and I was so aware of it, that I repented going; but 'the path of the wicked is full of snares.'" "Yes," said her excellent husband; "the more I see of human nature, even in its best estate, the more I am convinced that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint; but this £20 note teazes me; I wish I had never had it. I have really a mind to give it her; I have a cowardly feeling about it; I wish to clear myself entirely of all interference in Mrs. Potter's affairs; I see that I can do no good."

Mrs. W. "Perhaps, my dear, you might pay some honest creditor; or you could keep it, till she was really in want." "Are you sure, Sophia, that she does not suspect I have something for her?" "Perfectly sure."

This good man at last came to the following resolution: that he would call upon her, give her the note, and say, that if she left off her present employment, there was a like sum for her every six months; but, there was no support for public-houses likely to come from Mrs. Tucker.

With this resolution, he put on his hat, and went out on his unpleasant business. When he arrived there, he found the brewer and the distiller, the farmer, the butcher; in short, all Mrs. P.'s principal creditors in consultation; so he begged to speak with her apart. "I saw your uncle's housekeeper, Mrs. P. when I was in London; and told her your distress; I found her a very correct, worthy woman, and not unwilling to return good for evil; to treat you with humanity, who had never shown her any. She sends you this £20; and, if you give up your present mode of life, you may have a like sum every six months, by applying to Mr. Brownrigg, No. 21;" and he pointed out the very spot where this gentleman lived. And now, thankful to be rid of a business which had never pleased him, he offered a Pastor's prayer as he left the gateway; and, when doubt of its acceptance crossed his mind, this thought cheered him, "nothing is too hard for the Lord."

But we must return to the Brow and the Valley, to the Mill and the Rectory; our first friends and most endeared, and we linger fondly among them. On the return of Stephen and his mother, Michael called to welcome them, and to beg Fanny should want nothing which the Brow might afford, to make his mother comfortable, and the Mill neat. Mrs. Meredith was soon at work for her grand-children, and soon one in their domestic plans; she was mending sacks, making frocks, busy in the garden; in short, her active hand was every where. And Michael, whose eye saw all that was excellent, and looked kindly on all, was frequently found making one in their little circle. As they were sitting one evening, Michael reading an account of the Moravian teachers among the Hottentots, from the Missionary Register, Fanny with her baby on her lap, observed, "My dear brother, these people seem to receive the Word with joy; conversions seem more certain and abiding than they are here." "I hope not, Fanny. I quite agree, that they appear to receive it with greater simplicity. But I trust that here, when it is received, there are many who bring forth fruit abundantly, and who stand firmly." As they were in the midst of this conversation the door opened, and the quiet form

of Esther Humphries glided in. She slipped behind the chairs, and put down her bundle on the table which stood behind Fanny. "Pull off your bonnet, Esther, and stop a bit." "Give me something to do?" Fanny gave her the border of a cap. "I have a few words to say to you, bye-and-bye, Fanny." "Any thing of importance?" "I cannot say." Fanny looked surprized; and Mrs. M. in continuation of a question that she was about to ask, when Esther entered, said, "and so, Sir, you think that those Hottentots are quite changed, quite entire new people, Sir?" "Yes, ma'am, I do think so. I think the same wonderful change which God effects in us, when he sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts, is effected in them, only in them it is more striking, because they were the most degraded of our species: and they are now become neat and orderly, and submissive, to those who go among them." "Indeed, Sir." "Yes, ma'am. It is a very beautiful description which we have in these Registers, of the power of religion in Africa, and indeed over all the face of the earth. I hope we shall not be darker than those to whom we send the light."

Mrs. M. "Oh, dear me, no; I think that is very unlikely." Michael shook his

head, and she continued, "why, do you think, Mr. Kemp, that we shall ever put the entrails of the cattle round our necks, as the savages used to do?" "No; but I am not speaking of our outward habits; but our minds, of our prejudices, and our indifference. Now, I will give you an instance. I called on Sunday morning, to see a poor man in this parish, who lies very ill, andMr. Lascelles had requested me to call to see him. When I went in,"(Mrs. Meredith looked with a sort of astonishment at him, that Mr. Lascelles should ask Mr. Kemp to visit the sick for him.) She ventured to say, "Mr. Cooper visits the sick himself." "Doubtless; but I only mention this circumstance, to show you her sad ignorance and prejudice. This poor man was extremely ill, and he was one whom Mr. L. has hardly ever seen at church: so he asked me just to call, and read to him, and said he would see him himself the following day. I perceived by the looks of the wife, that I was not welcome; and, as I drew aside the curtain to ask him how he was, she came up to me, and said, she should be glad to speak with me. 'I hope, Sir, you be not going to disturb my husband, for he is very comfortable and peaceful.' I assured her that I was come at the request of Mr. Lascelles,

to enquire how he was, and to ask the state of his mind; as he never came to church, Mr. L. feared he had hitherto lived without God in the world. She replied, that 'people were very hard judging, and she believed her husband was as good a Christian as any man in the parish, be the other whom he would; for he had always been a good husband to her, and a good father to the children, though he did stay a little at the public-house; and that she could not bear to have him disturbed and frighted.'

"By this time, the sick man began to inquire who was there; and when I replied, that I had called to see him by Mr. L's. wish, he replied, 'It's mighty kind of Mr. L; I'm a great deal better; I sha'nt die this bout.' But whether you die or live, Sir, said I, it is well you should entertain thoughts of that country to which you are hastening. 'Oh, as for that, Sir, I see no good in talking about what we don't understand; there is nobody ever came back to tell us about it; so it is not to be supposed as any body can know.'" "That's very true," said Mrs. Meredith. Poor Stephen sat on thorns. He saw that his mother was as ignorant as the man Mr. Kemp was describing, and the latter scarcely knew whether to go on, or to

stop. At length he ventured to say, "But you know, ma'am, we have the written Word of God; we have his ordinances in the church; and, if we neglect these." Here Mrs. M. coloured very deeply, and said, "It was easy for people as had nothing else to do, to be constant at church; for her own part, she had always found it very difficult to go regular." Stephen said, "Well, Sir, and did you go on talking to this poor man?" "I asked him whether he had any fear of death? He said, 'he supposed nobody wished to die; he had not met with any body that did; it was not very natural to suppose they should like to go, and leave all their friends and relations.'

"I saw that it was next to impossible for me to be heard; so, after desiring he would send to the Brow Farm for any thing he wanted, I read a few texts touching upon human depravity, and on our lost estate by nature, and I saw they had scarce patience to let me finish. Now, I think this is a proof, that the darkness of our minds is quite as deep as that of the Hottentots." "Indeed, I think so," said Fanny; and so thought every one but Mrs. M.; and she still continued to think, that there was more fuss made about religion than was at all necessary. "Baby's asleep; if you will come up with me, Esther, I'll lay her down

on the bed." They both went up stairs. "Kind Mr. L. sent for me this afternoon, to say he had received a letter, inquiring if he had any such persons in the parish as Margaret Beal, and Mary Humphries; if he had, and would signify it to the house of Roberts and Co. Old Broad-street, they might hear something to their advantage. Mr. L. was so good as to say, he would write any letters for us; but I should be very sorry to trouble him, for it may be all a trick. I have heard of such things; have not you?" Fanny replied, "she had; but that she thought there was no end to be answered, by inquiring in such a Village as this; none but a good one. Have you any relations." "None that I know of. I have heard my mother speak of a brother, with whom she lived; but it is many years since, and I hardly remember him." Fanny thought it likely to be this uncle, and Esther thought the same; "but," said she, pausing, "I have heard my mother say, my uncle was so very much prejudiced against my poor father, and against religion." "Oh," said Fanny, "but you know, there is nothing too hard for our God." "Nothing," said Esther. "Ah, that *would* be a blessing, if my mother should find a change in him; but, if it is only to find him and his money, it would

sadly disturb the peace of our house, to have *one* who did not believe. We are all of one heart and one mind, and we live so comfortable." "They that fear the Lord, shall want no manner of thing that is good," said Fanny; "and so, Esther, my good girl, you are afraid of being rich."

Esther. "Not of being rich, Mrs. Meredith; but I am afraid of being independant of God. I am afraid of my own heart; because I know how deceitful it is; and I know it is no uncommon trick to draw people into inquiry in London, into temporal inconvenience, to unsettle them from the plain and obvious path of duty; and I should be sorry on my mother's account, because it would be raising ideas in her mind about my uncle's money, in which she is sure to be disappointed. We could not be happier than we are; I have sufficient to do, and we have not a want." "Then what do you mean to do, my dear." "To be guided entirely by Mr. Lascelles. But I was thinking, Mrs. Meredith, whether it would not be better to make the inquiry, if it is to be made, without saying any thing to my poor mother; for, as to me, it will be no disappointment if nothing comes of it; but for her, she certainly has a great regard for my uncle; and the hope of seeing him again; and

living happily with him, will be very delightful to her. So that I think it would be wisest to be at some certainty, before we communicate to her." "Did you say this to Mr. Lascelles, my dear." "No; I did not. But I think I shall step back, and ask the favour of him to inquire." "Yes; that must be right; for he is a kind gentleman, and I feel almost sure he would do any thing to serve you." "But, Mrs. Meredith, I have kept you a long time talking; you'll find all the things right in the bundle; and remember, if there is any thing I can do at any time, it will be a great pleasure for me." So Esther departed, and Mrs. Meredith began to observe immediately, what a very neat young person she was; "what sweet eyes, as blue as violets," said she, "with the pretty brown fringes over them; and such nice hands, like a lady's quite."

Fanny. "Yes indeed, mother, she is a very nice young person; and what is best of all, her mind is better than her body."—"So I should think," said Mrs. M. "for she seems made up of goodness. How pretty she sat down to work for you directly."—"Oh," said Fanny, "she is always doing something for me, she is the kindest creature, I am sure. My little Ellen has been kept so nice: many thanks to Esther

Humphries." Stephen and Michael had walked to the window, and were talking about poor Richard Moss, who was in a great state of weakness and distress; not exactly for money, because he was supplied by Michael with the daily allowance, which was more than sufficient for his real wants; but he could no longer go to the public-house, and he missed his companions there, and he had no comfort in his own bosom, which would make solitude agreeable to him. Michael felt for him, and that text was upon his tongue. "You see, Stephen, 'the way of transgressors is hard.'"—"Indeed it is," said Stephen. "There was one thing I was sorry to hear: the woman where he lodges, ever since he has been ill, has been begging of him to read his Bible, and to settle his affairs; and when she found he had nothing to leave, but that it was a daily allowance from you, she has altered her conduct, and become very far from kind, so Moss tells me."

"Do you know," said Michael, "I am so far a predestinarian as to think nothing happens in vain, and in this case it may do for Richard what neither you nor I could have done without it. Sickness is a silent preacher, but it works wonders; it brings down the haughtiness of man and lays it

low, and in that day the Lord alone is exalted."—" Well, that is true, Sir, and I am sure he wanted some chastisement."

Michael. " We all want it, my dear Stephen, and our good God will give it us sooner or later, a portion to our need. But I must go to this poor man ; I understand he desires to see me, I wish it may be upon good ground. Have you seen him, Stephen ?"—" Just for two minutes, the other evening, but he seemed very shy of me, and said he should like to see his master Kemp." " I have always felt, in thinking of Richard, that his kind cousin's plans were defeated, for he never came to the Brow with a wish to profit, except in the way of money, and of that I never have much to spare, beside his regular allowance, and that began to be too little for him, so that he got a knack of counting it, and fancying that there was some mistake, some day that he had called, and that I was not at home, though it had all been as regularly settled as possible; it is very disagreeable to be suspected in money matters."

Stephen. " I hope, Sir, you never suffer it to make you at all uneasy, because every one would acquit you." " And what's of more consequence, Stephen, my own conscience acquits me. This man must be at

least sixty-four or sixty-five, I have treated him always with the respect of a son; indeed, I have ever considered that it was my duty to do so, for I am certainly under great obligations to his own relative. Every thing I enjoy, Stephen, in time, comes from his family."

Thus these good young men stood conversing, till the shadows of evening and its cool breezes made Michael button his coat tighter, and with his oak staff sat out for the Brow. That parish had been infested by gipsies for a length of years; there had been some stop put to their plunder by the exportation of the gipsy grandfather, but still the little copses tempted them by offering shelter against the severity of the weather, and affording them a fine summer canopy to their various parties, and the Brow farm had always been an object of their aversion, since the prompt measures were taken for expelling them.

Michael was drawing near his home, when William came down the hill. "Master, you were late to-night, and Betty and I thought it better to come forward to meet you; for, though the gipsy grandfather is transported, and Samson is safe lodged, there are some sturdy fellows among them, such as I should not like you to meet

alone. There's something in the wind, I think, they have been hovering about here ever since it grew dark, and I fired the little old pistols out at the back door, and since that I determined to come on to you."

Our pedestrians reached their home in safety, Michael determined the following morning he would see Mr. Lascelles, and have some measures taken to clear the country; for this was not an innocent party, but a sturdy set whom it was not safe to meet; they fastened their doors, took all outward precautions, and went to their rest in peace, and rose the following morning in safety.

The silent progress of Esther's modest virtues were not unobserved by Michael; he never had felt any preference, she had never struck him but as a quiet unpretending girl, but he had walked down occasionally to the spinning-school, and there, when a new person was taken in, he had heard them say, "How awkward she is; I don't believe she'll ever fasten her thread;" and the mistress would reply, "I don't know that you would ever have done it, if it had not been for Esther." (The other laughing) "Very true, Mrs. but Esther Humphries be made up of patience." And an old bedridden woman, to whom

Michael gave leave to send for some milk, morning and evening, and on whom he occasionally called, had always some grateful word to say of Esther. Still he passed her by, and he had no present intention, but it was certainly like the stealing influence of the sun; he could not but feel it. In her own dwelling he had never seen her, and except twice, he had never met her at his sister's. This good girl was methodical and orderly, every thing found its proper time and its proper place; she was so complete a workwoman, that her little narrow hems formed the edge of all her borders, and so delicately clean, that it gave you an idea of the purity within; she expended upon herself but a very small portion of her own earnings, and yet she would not give her mother all she received, but every now and then some useful thing was slipped into her drawers, which she knew her kind parent would not have purchased. And her aunt too shared her bounty: a warm shawl, a new apron, a pair of Sunday gloves; and the good woman would say, "Esther, child, it shan't be," and she went on with her work. "I say it shan't be, child; here are you working early and late, never getting a bit of a walk, and all to dress up me and your mother.". The tears in the good girl's eyes, tears of joy,

would glisten while she replied, " My dear aunt, if you knew what a pleasure it is to me, that you will take any thing that I can buy, you would not say it shan't be." Affairs were in this train, when Mr. Lascelles, with an open letter in his hand, met Esther coming towards his house. " Good morning, Hetty, are you going to the rectory ?"—" Yes, Sir."—" Very good; I was going to seek you," and stepped back with her there. " Sit down," as he pointed to the chair in his study, and closing the door; " that letter I have this morning received." The contents were as follows :

Sir,—I beg you to accept my thanks for the trouble I have occasioned you; I would trespass farther. Will you permit one of your servants to inform Margaret Beal and Mary Humphries that Jonathan Brownrigg, their brother, intends paying them a visit early in next week, perhaps Tuesday.—Sir, your faithful humble servant, J. Brownrigg.

N. B. They must get me a bed somewhere. I am sorry to trouble you so much, Sir; but if you come to London, I am a leisure man, and I will be at your service.

Poor Esther's colour went and came as she perused this, and Mr. L. looked at

her with an inquiring eye as he walked up and down his study with his stick under his arm. "Well, this is pleasant news, is it not, my good girl?"—"Why, Sir, I'm so very happy, so very contented, that I'm afraid of a change." (*Mr. L.*, with a dignified look, and a sweet habitual composure,) "They shall not be afraid of any evil tidings, for their heart standeth firm, and believeth in the Lord."

Esther. That's a delightful state, Sir; I wish I could say in my heart that I never was afraid; but we are so peaceful and tranquil, and I don't know quite what my uncle's temper may be, so that it makes me feel very anxious, and I really don't know how to break the news to my mother; I think she will be pleased too.

Mr. Lascelles. "I have no doubt of it; I have heard a character of him from my friend Mr. Walker, which is extremely pleasing." "Is he at all religious?" "I fear not, but his moral qualities seem excellent, and deserving our respect."

Esther rose to be going, and was planning and projecting all the way home: they had wondered at her stay, and as she entered, her aunt said, "There have been two or three asking for you."

Esther. I'm very sorry for it, aunt;

I'm afraid they have troubled you, but I have been to the rectory.—" To the rectory," said Mary Humphries.—" To the rectory," repeated her aunt. " Yes, I had a little business," and again she hesitated. " Well, child, speak out," said her mother. She did, and then presented her uncle's letter, and sat watching the countenance of her mother. She observed the tears steal down her cheeks; she folded the letter, and went to her room. " Is any thing the matter, Esther, love?" said Margaret. Esther repeated the whole. " Well," said Margaret, " this is particular, that ever Jonathan should think of coming to see us. This is such an answer to my prayers; never did I think to gladden my eyes with the sight of my brother again, poor fellow! But Hetty, how did you know about your uncle, child?" —" I heard nothing, aunt, but what I have told you; 'tis all through Mr. Lascelles."

By this time the mother rejoined the family circle, and they were all looking at each other with doubtful expression. Esther was fearful to say any thing, not knowing the exact state of her mother's mind. However, at last she hazarded. " Well, mother, you have read that letter?"—

" Yes, my love, and I hope it will be all for good, Hetty ; all good for you, my dear."

Margaret. Oh, there's no doubt of that, my dear Mary ; all things shall work together for good, to them that love God.

Mary. But there is an old saying, Margaret, " A burnt child do dread the fire ;" and though I love my dear brother, yet I have had some painful days with him. You don't remember him, my dear, do you, Hetty.

Esther. " No, mother, I don't indeed ; I don't think I ever saw him."—" Dear me, I don't think you ever did ; he called once, I remember, but I believe it was before you were born."—" Well, we must think about getting ready for him, aunt ; how shall we manage it ?"—" Why, child, I really can't say ; but I was thinking perhaps Mrs. Meredith would give me a bed, she is so very kind to you, child."—" Oh, aunt, I am sure she would, but I do not think they have one to spare ; perhaps you could get one at the clerk's ; shall I go, aunt?"—" Why no, child, you have a great deal of work to do ; I'll put on my bonnet, and go myself; I think a little fresh air would revive me." So she set off, but had not gone far before she met Fanny Meredith with her baby in her

arms. "Well, this is a sight, neighbour, to see you go walking; you would almost make me doubt the day of the week." Margaret told her errand, and how Esther had said, that Mrs. Meredith could not help them.—"Oh, but," said Fanny, "if I have not a bed, there are plenty at the Brow; so don't you go any further, neighbour, about that, for I'll speak to my brother, and settle that for you; and you know Betty Smith, the good creature, she will take care to have every thing aired and in its right place."—"Well, this is very kind of you, Mrs. Meredith, I don't know that we can do better." So the plan was settled.

Michael had seen Mr. Lascelles upon the subject of the gipsies, and he had got a warrant to remove them; and it was just at this moment that Margaret and Fanny were about to part, that they perceived the whole cavalcade moving down the street. Their looks were determined and resentful, and Margaret and Fanny both trembled as they passed them; but the constable was in attendance, and two or three stout men beside, and several farmers on horseback were riding slowly behind them. All these precautions taken, it was hoped the country would be cleared; but there was something more than commonly

malignant in this party. James Brown had kept within for some days, for he had never felt secure while they were there. Poor fellow! he had suffered enough for the folly of his youth, and it might truly be said, "that the wickedness of his heels encompassed him." His heart smote him when he remembered how long he had been a companion of these desperate people.

Margaret. Why, they are frightful creatures howsoever.

Fanny. They are indeed, neighbour; I believe they are the same gang that Robert belonged to. Poor Robert, he is sadly punished, I believe his end is near.

Margaret. "Dear me, and is he to be hanged then? Well, I remember Farmer Newton always said, that boy would come to be hanged, for you see it's pretty clear when they do nothing but mischief. I say its pretty clear what must be the end of it.—Well, a good morning to you, neighbour." Fanny went on to the Brow, and met her brother just as he was going up the hill; he took her baby, and they ascended together. When he had heard her message, it was, "Oh yes, undoubtedly, certainly; whatever you wish, my dear. But when did you say?"—"On Tuesday, I think: it was not quite fixed, it depended on the coaches."—"Those gipsies

are removed, Fanny, I find; we have not been able to keep an egg lately; I have lost a good many chickens, and the night before last I think they took a pig from the sty."

Fanny. "No matter, brother, so they let you be in peace." "Well, Fanny, if this good man comes on Tuesday, I suppose some one will conduct him here, or must I call." "I don't know what to say, my dear brother, I think it might be better to let Stephen bring him here; I'll manage that." The spirit of this dear girl was so kind, and her influence so general, that she was quite secure of having all her little schemes accomplished.

We must now return to Jonathan Brownrigg, and give the reader some idea of the state of his mind. It is true he had every thing he wanted, as far as meat, drink, and clothing: he had a pleasant little house, but he sat down alone by his fire, and now he had lost his daily employments in his retreat from trade, he began to find what many others have found before him, that the mere business of eating, drinking, and dressing, reading the newspaper, and looking out of the window to see whose carriages past, made a vapid and childish life: and he resolved to

employ the remaining period of existence, in a way more suited to comfort and usefulness. "If I have any nieces or nephews," said he to himself, "they may help to amuse me. I think I could turn schoolboy for once, and assist in flying a kite." Well, he determined to enquire, and the reader has heard the result; and he has taken his place for the following Tuesday, and he is now seated in the coach, with only three companions, a farmer, a little girl who has just left school, and a gentleman, of whom he can make nothing, as he will not speak a word. Mr. B. was a compassionate soul, and could in no way account for this taciturnity, unless by illness or ill temper, "You are unwell, Sir, shall I change sides with you?" "No, Sir, I thank you," was the cold reply, and they travelled on in a melancholy silence. He was more successful with the little girl, whom he furnished with biscuits, and whose history he had from beginning to end: the farmer too was communicative, and gave broad hints of what he could do if he were at the head of affairs. Mr. B. was strictly loyal, and assured him that we often found fault with what we could not mend, and that to the government their task was not easy, for if they pleased one party, they

were sure to displease the other, and that for his part, he had set a resolution, to begin reformation at home, where he knew it was wanted, and my dear Sir, if you and many others of the yeomanry would take the same resolution, I have no doubt but the present evils would be more easily borne. The agriculturist replied, "it was easy for the trader who had made his fortune, and retired, to be contented with distress which did not touch him. But for those who had the burden to bear, it was a different thing; and if things went on as they did, gentlemen would be obliged to farm their own estates." Mr. B. saw that the subject was painful, and began again to talk to the little girl, "You're a young traveller, Miss, shall you have a friend to meet you?" "No, Sir, I believe not; when I get down, I know very well where to go." "You are sorry to leave school, I suppose?" "Yes, Sir, I'm sorry for some things, but for others I shall be glad." "Well, now, for what should you be sorry?" "I shall leave some nice companions, Sir, but I shall be glad to have done with lessons and study, and all that." "Oh," said Mr. B. "I thought study was very delightful. I thought it was one of the charms of the boarding-school; I'm think-

ing you'll miss it sadly." The little girl laughed, and shook her head.

Mr. B. "Well, come now, tell me, how shall you spend your time at home?"

"Oh, I am sure I cannot tell, but I shall go out and see mamma's friends, and have company at home."

Mr. B. "And don't you mean to work for your papa and your brothers?"

"Oh, I suppose I shall a little."

"If you were my little girl, I should make you work a good deal, and as for going visiting, you would have but very little of it, I can tell you. I think, for the most part, it is spending time very idly. When you come home from your visitings, now tell me the truth, do you not begin to point out some defect, to wonder at some oddity, or to ridicule some personal deformity?"

"Oh no, Sir!"

Mr. B. "Why, now, can you say that you never laugh at any thing you see or hear when you've been visiting, if you can?" And he took his pocket book out of his pocket. "Come, give me your name, for I must put it down," the child looked a little confused. "Now, I'll tell you what you'll say when you get home, you'll begin about the people in the coach; you'll say that you travelled with such a

queer looking man with a long nose, and a snuff coloured coat, and a brown bob, and then you'll begin to mimic me, and you'll tell your mamma that there was a gentleman in the corner who did not speak a word to you, that there was a farmer who did nothing but grumble, and you'll quite forget all the good advice I have given you." Little miss looked rather put out, for she really had been thinking what an odd set they were, and that she should tell mamma about them, so that Mr. Brownrigg appeared to her to be endowed with prophetical powers, and she remained silent during the rest of the journey.

When Mr. B. reached the town nearest the village, where his sister dwelt, he saw a remarkably good-looking man enquiring for him; it was Stephen Meredith; "Is there a gentleman come by the coach of the name of Brownrigg?" Mr. B., with his little bag in one hand, his umbrella under his arm, and his purse in his hand, ready to settle, looked round quickly at this enquiry, "Yes, Sir, my name is Brownrigg."

Stephen. "Sir, I was coming over on a little business, and Mrs. Beal asked me to show you the way to her dwelling, and as we had a spare horse, I brought one for you, Sir."

"I'm extremely obliged to you. This is unexpected kindness, it's many years since I was on horseback; we Londoners find the stages so convenient, Sir, that we do not often exhibit ourselves on the road; but as you have been so very kind"—— The affair was soon arranged.

"You know my sister then, Sir," said Mr. B. as they were riding along together.

Stephen. Yes, Sir, I know Mrs. Beal very well; she's a very nice woman, and so is Mrs. Humphries and her daughter.

Brownrigg. Her daughter! oh, then she has only one, I suppose?

Stephen. No, Sir.

Brownrigg. No son?

Stephen. No, sir.

Brownrigg. Well, we can't help that, to be sure, I should have liked a boy, but, if I can't have both, perhaps a good stay at home girl. Yes, yes, I dare say it's all right.

Stephen. Oh yes, Sir, no doubt of that.

Brownrigg. Oh, you think its all ordered, I suppose?

Stephen. Yes, Sir, the scripture tells us, that "not a hair shall fall to the ground without the knowledge of our heavenly Father."

Brownrigg. And so you say she is a

nice girl. Come, you must tell me a little about her; let's see, how old is she?

Stephen (smiling). Why, Sir, we don't ask the ladies' ages; but I should suppose about twenty.

Brownrigg. Is she tall?

Stephen. Rather tall than short, Sir.

Brownrigg. Is she fair?

Stephen. Yes, very fair.

Brownrigg. Oh, so was her mother, foolish creature——but it's too late to be angry—I've been angry over and over again—and so she's tall and fair—she is altogether a good-looking girl, I suppose?

Stephen. Yes, Sir, indeed, a very sweet young woman, and such a pretty, modest way with her, that's she's greatly respected all over the village, both by high and low.

Brownrigg. It was very kind of you, Sir, to come and meet me, I suppose you are a near neighbour?

Stephen. Not very near, Sir, but my wife and your niece are very good friends, and my wife's brother, who has been the best friend I ever had, would never hinder me of a horse, if I wanted it; and if you please, Sir, you're to sleep there to-night.

Brownrigg. Very good, Sir, wherever they may see fit to put me. But I must see my sister to-night, for I'm an impa-

tient man, and like Joseph, "My bowels yearn over my relations," and though I am not lord over all Egypt, I have made a pretty little sum by fair trading—and I may make the rest of their days comfortable. I suppose they have not much, poor things.

Stephen. I don't know, Sir, they make a very decent appearance.

Mr. B. buttoned his coat tight, and the tear was in his eye: he drew up the reins of his horse, held them as though he were accurately measuring their length, and went on silently. "Pretty country, Sir." "Yes, very. I hear the distant bell, I suppose you have some rejoicing?" "I don't know, Sir, that there is any thing particular." They rode on for some time, and they entered the borders of the village, and began to meet faces whom Stephen knew. "And now, Sir, we have not far to go; do you like to ride into the village, or shall I take your horse?" "I should be sorry to trouble you, Sir, to take the horse. I could ride forwards with you and put up the horse, and then go to my sister." "There is no occasion for that, Sir, because we shall come to Mrs. Beal's, quite in the middle of the village, and I shall have a hill to climb, which is quite unnecessary for you."

"You are really very kind; but I am ashamed of being so troublesome to you." The affair settled, they parted at the entrance of the village, Stephen promising to send one to guide him to the Brow, where he was to sleep.

And now, reader, we must visit the waiting family, every member of which experienced a palpitating uneasiness at the prospect of the meeting: for though they had all lifted their hearts in secret, and fortified one another by the remembrance that all things work together for good, still they dreaded change where all had been so peaceful, and every step was listened to, and as the sun was descending to the west—"Well, sister, I do not think he will come to-night," said Margaret. "Not come? oh, I never knew Jonathan fail in an appointment." She had just said this as he entered the little garden gate, and closing it carefully after him, was walking up the neat gravel path, when Mary Humphries met him, and taking his umbrella with one hand, and pressing his other in silence, she led him to their little sitting room, where Esther was at her work. Margaret had just stepped into the back kitchen to see to the vegetables she was about to boil for his

supper. Esther rose to take his bag, and waited modestly blushing till he should take notice of her. "My dear brother!" He stifled his feelings, "Where's Margaret?" and Esther stepped back, "My uncle is come," and in a moment his sister was at his side. "Time has changed us," said Mr. Brownrigg, "I should not have known either of you." "Time and sorrow," said Mary Humphries, "we have both had sad losses." "I told you so," said he, "I told you a single life was best for you, see I have lost nothing." "My dear brother, you must have lost some of your friends and acquaintance." "Oh, certainly, but then I have new ones if the old die off." Mary shook her head, "Ah, my dear brother, I know you better." Esther was glad to hear her mother say this, for she did not like her uncle's speech, and she now perceived that it was play, mild play. Under a meeting of this kind, the mind is so oppressed, and the variety of ideas that dwell upon it, that there can be no enjoyment. Silence seems the best refuge—sometimes activity is a relief—and this they all found it. So one began to lay the cloth, another went up stairs with the bag, yet frequently saying some little kind word of

welcome and endearment; "And don't you remember, Margaret," "And don't you remember, Jonathan," were the frequent expletives. Esther could not join much; but she stole a few glances at this newly found relation, and assisted in preparing the humble meal.

Mr. B. was as much at a loss as any of them, for he was full of very kind feelings, and he did not like the retrospect, because he thought he had been rather too severe, and when he saw the amiable young creature before him, and reflected that she did not even know him, a something like shame stole over his mind, when he conjectured what she must think of him. So he began to talk of Mrs. Potter, and asked Margaret if she remembered her. Mary Humphries clearly recollected her, and much that was censurable in her conduct, particularly her unkindness to her uncle's active housekeeper; but she was some time in comprehending what her brother had to do with it. He explained the accidental meeting with Mr. Walker, and then asked if they knew him. "Ah, nothing happens in vain," said Margaret, "all the links of providence are fitted to each other." "I begin to think so, too, Mary. For my heart was yearning over you at the very time, when this benevolent

black coat fell in my way. Do you know if he has been down here." "Really I do not, brother, but I remember some years ago," said Margaret, "that he was here at Mrs. Meredith's wedding, I believe he is a great friend to the Kemp family." *(Brownrigg.)* "I should think he would be a kind friend to any who fell in his way. The law of kindness is upon his lip; I don't know when I have been so pleased with any person: he had a nephew with him, a very pleasing young man."

They were conversing thus, when a gentle tap at the door was responded to, by "Come in," and Michael Kemp presented himself: "he had come," as he said, "to assist Mr. Brownrigg in finding his way to the Brow, by taking a short cut, through some of the fields, and avoiding the steep ascent." "This is very kind of you, Sir, you will do as we do, Mr. Kemp." "I thank you, Sir, I took my supper before I came. I can wait your leisure." So Michael sat quietly turning over the leaves of a book which lay in the window-seat, it was Olney Hymns, and that beautiful one, "How blest thy creature is, oh Lord," first arrested his attention. "And now, Sir," said Brownrigg, buttoning up his coat,

"I am at your service," and taking up his umbrella and his hat, "But who has run away with my bag?" "I carried it up stairs, Sir," said Esther. "Oh, you rogue. Well, you must fetch me my night-cap, or stop, let me see, I had better go myself, if you please. And good night to you, good night to you, and what time must I be with you to-morrow?" These minor affairs settled, he set out on his walk to the Brow.

It was a beautiful moonlight evening, and those clouds which had been tinged with the setting sun, had not yet lost their brilliancy. "You live in London, I believe, Sir," said Michael. "No, Sir, indeed, I have lived in the country for some time, I have a garden and keep chickens; in short, I have all the conveniences of London, and all the pleasures of the country, except to be sure we have a little dust, which we must expect, where there are so many carriages passing; but I have some trees at the bottom of my garden, so that the dust does not annoy us much." "You would find it very different here, Sir," said Michael, "we are never troubled with dust, never amused with carriages. But as you're fond of a garden, you will find plenty of amusement, Mrs. Beal's flowers are beautiful, she al-

ways took pains with them; and our rectory garden is a very fine one, for the rector and his family are all fond of flowers." "I like them myself," said Mr. Brownrigg, "I have a neighbour next door to me who laughs at my bed of carnations, he says, Well, neighbour Brownrigg, for my part, I think the finest flower is the cauliflower." "I have often been struck with the beauty even of vegetables," said Michael Kemp, "the kail in particular." "Yes, yes," said Brownrigg, "I know."

Michael. There is the hand of a great master, Sir, in all the works of nature.

Brownrigg. Yes, and in nothing more than our own form, and now I begin to feel I am going up hill, that I breathe with more difficulty, and my foot also is sensible of a change. I was called in the other day to assist in restoring a drowned man, we had one of the faculty with us, who was showing me how to rub so as to encourage the play of the lungs, it's very surprising! I never had a notion of it before.

Michael felt the influence of his new companion: he did not think him a religious character, and yet there was something pleasant, something that he liked, and he was careful not to offend him.

Brownrigg was equally careful to make himself agreeable to one who had so kindly provided for his accommodation. Betty Smith was at the door looking out for her master, and William at her side; and there were slippers at the fire, and the candle was lighted as soon as they entered, and the gleam sent over the ample kitchen, showed Brownrigg the clean and orderly accommodations of the farmer's dwelling: his servants stood waiting to know his pleasure, and Michael did not hesitate to bring out his Bible, and to seat himself for prayer.

Brownrigg was taken by surprize, and he could not and would not object. The chapter in turn was Nathan's parable of the ewe-lamb, and the beautiful chapter being read unexpectedly, without other association, presented itself in a prominent manner to the eye of his mind; and Michael ventured to tell his household, that in many things where defects are pointed by scripture, reading this sentence, "thou art the man," is suitable in its application, and in none more than in indifference. This observation fastened upon the memory of Brownrigg, and the more strongly, perhaps, because he felt that however he might conform to the

outward rites and ceremonies of the church to which he belonged, he was not much interested in any part of its devotions, and had often been surprized to see men of sense contend with so much heat, about what he thought mere matter of opinion.

Michael observed, that in general many were more ready to make the application than to receive it: and he said this required great guard, for we must remember we were not prophets sent to our fellow-creatures with warnings and threatenings, but plain, ordinary characters, who should be ready to learn from the Word of God, and if bringing the application to our own bosoms by faith and examination, we were to say, "thou art the man," it would be more becoming than to suffer our censures to rest on others.

Brownrigg was pleased upon the whole: he thought what the young farmer said was true, and yet it was a mode entirely new to him, thus applying the scriptures, and especially the Old Testament, to ourselves. The following morning he ventured to ask Michael, "whether he had ever been a preacher?" Michael replied, "he never had, and that he was greatly surprized at the question." But as the mind of each was under the law of kind-

ness, nothing that offended either passed, and the conversation turned upon village improvements, the new school, &c. &c.

As soon as breakfast was over, Mr. Brownrigg equipped himself for walking, and said he would find his way to his sister's. As he descended the hill from the Brow, he could not but observe the beauty of the surrounding landscape: the irregular, but picturesque form of the village, the church which rose ivy-crowned, and the thickly studded cottages among the distant foliage: the winding river and the level plain in the distance. "This "is all very pretty," said he, "but I am "afraid I should grow tired. I think "I should sigh for London. No, I do "not think it would do to transplant "me. I am used to the place where I "am, and I should be out of my element "here, but there is no haste, I shall take "my time." Thus resolving, he continued his way till he found himself among the high trees near the rectory. To be sure, I must have turned wrong, I never remember this. Well, there can be no harm in asking. So he went towards the back part of the house, and asked if they could direct him the way to Mrs. Beal's cottage, the servant replied, that indeed she knew nothing of her: he asked the way to the village, she told him he must

keep to the right, and while he was thus conversing with her, Mr. Lascelles passing through the garden, overheard this last direction. "Who can that be?" said he, musing, and when he understood for whom he enquired, pulling on his gloves which he had heretofore held in his hand, he said, "I am going to visit a sick neighbour, and I will put you on your road." So Mr. Lascelles and Mr. B. walked on together. "You are Mrs. Beal's brother, I presume?" "Yes, Sir." "You are happy in two very amiable sisters, and two whom I consider very useful in my parish." *(Mr. Brownrigg.)* "I am glad to hear it, Sir, though I could not have expected it, for I should never have thought they had the power of being useful." "Excuse me," said Mr. Lascelles, "I do not mean in giving money, that I consider as of secondary importance; but their example, their order, their willingness to assist in every act of mercy and kindness, and your little niece, Sir, is a pattern for young persons." Brownrigg's eyes glistened at this news, he said, "he had seen her but once, and could not give an opinion, but he was glad that she had conducted herself so as to merit his notice." By this time they had reached the street, and were drawing near the cottage. "I fear, Sir, I have taken you out of your way." "No,

indeed," said Mr. Lascelles, "I was going past the very door."

They were all in order to receive their brother, and had a dish of tea in readiness for him. "Thank you, thank you," said the good-natured man, "but I have breakfasted, and since that been to your parson's, who walked with me to your door. I like him much: he seems a judicious, sensible man, and a fine looking man too." "Oh, brother, he is indeed a good man," said Mary, "I think you'll be pleased to hear him preach, and he is very kind to his parish, visiting the sick, and he gives away a great deal; and his wife is always doing something for the good of the poor." "That's all as it should be," said Mr. Brownrigg, "I like to see black coats in their duty; I give my guinea very willingly where I live, for the support of an afternoon sermon, though I cannot say much in favour of our lecturer. I believe the man means well, but when one has just had one's dinner, that equal humdrum tone in which he reads his sermon, almost puts me in mind of a line in Gray's Elegy,

'And drowsy tinklings lull the distant fold,'

and it's quite an effort to me to keep awake."

M. Why then, brother, do you not go

where you can hear something more animating?

B. Do you think I would leave my parish church? No, I've always been a true churchman.

Esther. Well, uncle, I think you'll be pleased to hear Mr. Lascelles; he is so excellent a preacher, and so very kind.

Mr. B. You're remarkably well off. I'm delighted with your young farmer, such a steady, respectable young man, I have not seen for some time; and his maid is a pattern of good housewifery and order.

Margaret. That she is indeed, brother, I have known Betty Smith from a child, and she is so faithful and honest.

Mr. B. I suppose she has a pretty good place of it.

Margaret. There's a good deal to do, brother, she has all the dairy to mind, only she has a girl under her, and I believe she works for her master.

Esther. Oh, aunt, you forget; Mr. Kemp puts out his plain work.

Margaret. Ah true, child, but I believe she mends for him; Betty Smith has seen great reverses, brother, she was not born for hard labour; but then she is such a contented creature, that she is satisfied with all the divine appointments.

Mr. B. That is right, that is what every body should be.

Mary. True brother, but that's not always easy to practise.

Mr. B. Oh! perhaps not. Pray do you know a person of the name of Walker, a clergyman. I made an acquaintance lately, and I am anxious to hear more of him, have not met so pleasant a gentleman"—— Esther looked up, "Does he live at P——, uncle?" "Yes," here Mr. B. related his adventure, and the history of Mrs. Potter, and Esther's varying countenance, for she now and then looked up from her work upon her uncle, gave him great pleasure, and he said to himself, "Sweet, sensible looking creature! Well, "I'm an active being; you must give me "something to do; if you don't find work "for me, I shan't stay with you."

Margaret. What kind of work, brother, would you like to do?

Mr. B. Why, I can dig your garden, sow your seeds; I can make trellis work if you have any wood. I think a little over your door would improve it very much, (they were all of the same opinion,) and I could read to you.

Mary said, "that would be delightful, brother."

Mr. B. "Have you any books?" Mary

replied, "Not many, but they had kind friends who would lend them some." So the little party seemed establishing in good harmony, and Mr. B. was beginning to taste the delights of family union, and Esther soon won his affections by her modest, unobtruding manners, her industry, and her duty to her parent.

Things were in this train, Mr. B. going up every evening to the Brow, and returning the following morning before breakfast, when James Brown called in with a message from Mr. Lascelles to Margaret, to ask her to step to the rectory. "Nothing the matter I hope, James Brown?" "Nothing that I know of. No, I believe it's something, some charity or other, because my mistress was sitting in the greenhouse this morning, they were talking in a low tone together, and then my master desired me to step for you." "Oh, very well," said Margaret, "I'll be with his reverence directly; I'll just put on a clean apron, James Brown, and get my bonnet, do not stop, child, for I shall walk too slow for you."

James. "Oh, you need not heed that, Mrs. Beal." "No, child, go, I'd rather come by myself." James departed, and now all eyes were turned to Margaret to know if any thing was the matter. "I don't know

till I get there; you shall hear all about it when I come back, that is to say, if I'm at liberty to mention it." "That is a very good clause, Margaret," said her brother. The honest woman smiled, and departed.

Nothing is indifferent to a mind under the influence of religion, as is beautifully observed in a little work designed for children; 'Eyes and no eyes, or the difference of a walk, to a mind awake to the beauties of nature, and a mind stupidly inclosed in a body, moving mechanically.' Every neighbour Margaret met awakened some interest, for the spirit of love dwelt in her bosom. If they were indifferent, she sighed for them, if they were alive to their eternal interests, there was the sacred union, the tie of sisterhood, and the dear old Christian had a kind word for all. She met the little ones coming from the school, and it was, Well dears, good children, I hope. Oh, how differently does the Christian, warmed with the sense of God's pity and compassion, walk through this wilderness world; how different to the mere moral character, who looks with the every day vacancy on every object; how full of life and vitality is every moment of existence; how important to some, indifferent to none. Time bears us on, but not heedlessly, and while Margaret obeyed

the call of her pastor, she was moving to provide for persons for whom she was not naturally interested.

James Brown waited at the garden gate, and led Margaret to the green-house, where Mr. Lascelles was sitting, and he placed a seat for her. "Well, Mrs. Beal," said Mr. Lascelles, "you see when a carpenter wants to work, he naturally looks for his tools, and if he wants to do any thing particularly nice, he takes care that those tools should be well tempered and in good order. My Mentoria wants to set idle people to work, and we have been looking out for somebody who is willing to do a good work, and in it there must be something of the spirit and temper of our *Divine Master*, for the benefit must be conferred on the unthankful and the evil." All this time Margaret had kept bowing her head, and saying, "Yes, Sir," and "Yes, Sir," and as Mr. Lascelles closed, she inquired, "And what, Sir, would you please to have me to do?" "Is it possible for your niece to take an apprentice, Mrs. Beal? Because I have been thinking that if she would instruct one of the Miss Jennings's, it might be a means of those poor girls providing for themselves, and giving some help to their father and mother."

Margaret. I don't know, Sir, what my niece would say to it, for she is such a modest young creature, that she would be ashamed to teach those who from situation in life might be expected to know more than she does.

Mr. Lascelles. Oh, she may put aside all that false humility; if ignorance is a recommendation, I can venture to say we are not deficient. No, no, we are excellently gifted there.

Margaret. Sir, my brother is come to stay with us a little while, and we could not well make any change while he is in the house; but this I promise you, that when he is gone, every thing in Esther's power she will gladly do; and yet, (said this good woman, looking thoughtfully,) to speak what I think, Sir, (and here she paused,) would it not take the little bit of bread out of my Esther's mouth, Sir? You know she lives by her work, Sir, and to be sure, Farmer Jennings's daughters being born and bred here, it's natural to think people would employ them.

Mr. Lascelles. Margaret, we would not hurt your niece I am sure upon any consideration. Modest, good girl, and a pious girl too. My thought was, that it would afford her an opportunity of being use-

ful, and that is a great satisfaction, Margaret.

Margaret. Yes, I'm sure, Sir, Esther would think so; but you see my poor sister half depends on her fingers, and indeed I don't think the Miss Jennings's would condescend to learn of my Esther, they be sad, proud damsels.

Mrs. L. shook her head, she knew the truth of this, and the good pastor, after taking two or three reflective turns in his green-house, and picking some faded leaves from the orange trees, said, "While I thought I could do both parties a service, I was desirous of this; but I see Margaret is right, and it would be injuring Esther to serve them, which you must know was far from my intention."

Margaret. "Oh no, Sir, that I'm sure you would not hurt a hair of her head," and Margaret Beal made her curtsy and retired. Scarcely had she cleared the gate of the Rectory, when she met Miss Louisa Jennings. She was so dressed, and with a parasol in her hand, had more the appearance of a lady of fortune and independence, than of a young woman who was about to make her way in life: if she had not spoken to Margaret, Margaret had not known her. The latter carefully avoided saying any thing of the conversa-

tion she had just had, and indeed she meant to be equally silent at home. She knew Esther's good will, and how little she thought of consequences.

As soon as she entered her neat little dwelling, her good-natured brother began. "Well, dame Margaret, and so you have been paying morning visits?" "Yes, brother, I have; I have been to see our good clergyman." "He seems a friendly man, and preaches plainly to the people; and he considers the poor. This looks well." "Yes, indeed, the poor are not overlooked here, brother. There is many a Minister that have not got so much right to think highly of himself as ours, that can't stoop to speak a word to a poor person. You know our Mr. L. is a high-born man, and uncommonly well bred."

Mr. B. There is one thing I am afraid of, Margaret; and that is, that he is a friend of Methodism.

M. I'm sure, brother, I don't know what he is a friend to; but I know I can always find his doctrine, his faith, and his practice, in the Bible, and that is the only sure word of testimony.

Mr. Brownrigg was so increasingly pleased with his niece, that he had lingered till the middle of October, when he began to think he ought to look at his home, to see

after his little Peggy, who had no one to counsel and direct her but Mrs. Tucker. This good creature had done as she would be done by, seen Peggy most days, and had her to dinner on Sundays. Mr. B. wanted to ascertain whether he might be likely to be received constantly as an inmate with his sisters, if he could build him an house large enough to lodge them all comfortably; but this was a matter he knew not how to propose; for he could not easily brook a refusal. So he sounded them; asked if they had any fears in winter? They assured him no, and he was beat off from every distant hope, and began to value the residence more highly now, as it was likely he was about to lose it; but it was time he decided upon something; and while balancing in his mind what this decision should be, Esther, in the simplicity of her heart, said, "Dear uncle, how we shall miss you!" She had been his companion, almost every day, in his walks round the parish, and he insisted on her accepting many nice additions to her wardrobe; so that though still plainly dressed, it was her uncle's pleasure she should appear as his niece. Common report soon settled her as heir to her uncle; but we, who know more of his mind than the public, are aware that he was a man very peculiar in

his way of thinking; that he held out no golden hopes ; but waited and studied the characters he dwelt with. Yet, notwithstanding all this prudence, this amiable young creature had made strong impressions on his firm mind, and she had brought about what her mother never could. She had gradually led him to listen to that doctrine which offends every Pharisee, (original sin,) and she ventured to say, "Well, uncle, we will give it up, and own ourselves mistaken, if you can find one human being living, or recorded in the page of history, who never sinned;" and thus they ended every discussion. Mr. B. saying, she must have a very wicked heart to be so uncharitable; .and Esther owning, that from what she knew of herself, she must think, judging by Scripture rule, that the doctrine of human depravity was a truth which could not be controverted. "You, my dear uncle, are full of benevolent feeling; and dispositions of that sort are so happy in themselves, and so overflowing with good-will to others, that they are but too apt to place all excellence in that one quality; whereas, you know, there are many doors at which sin enters;" which she forbore to particularize, fearing to go too far; and to offend him whom she wished much to persuade. The change in Est-

her's appearance, since her uncle's arrival, raised her in the opinion of every light mind. The Miss Jennings's began to wonder that they had not perceived before, how very genteel a person Esther was; and then this rich old uncle would leave her a fortune. "Well, to be sure, some people are in luck."

The minds of the village were in this train, when Mr. B. went to London; and, as they kept no servant, and Esther made no confidences of what passed in her own family, they were greatly at a loss what to conjecture. It was the opinion of some, that the old gentleman and his sisters could not agree. This conjecture was soon furnished with a requisite dialogue; and some little eaves-dropper having heard the uncle say to the niece, "Well, child, we must agree to differ;" spread the report, and it was soon current that Mr. B. had gone away in great anger, and meant to leave all his property to his housekeeper. The Miss. J.'s were soon in possession of all that invention could furnish; and their mother meeting Betty Smith, the following dialogue was held. "I'm very sorry to hear that the nice old gentleman, your lodger, is gone away." (*Betty Smith.*) "Why, my master never had a lodger." "Oh, dear; why, I thought he

had. Why, has not that Mr. Brownstigg been lodging at your house for this two months?" "If you mean Mr. Brownrigg Margaret Beal's brother, master did by him what he does by every body else; he did him a good turn when he wanted it." "Oh, dear; well, I thought your master had let his lodgings."

Mrs. J., though a very good natured woman to her own family, feeling her circumstances change, was delighted to bring others to her level. More particularly, since he had declined the family compact, she took a pleasure in lowering the Kemp family in any way she could.

Betty. Oh, tisn't that my master would be above letting lodgings, or doing any thing else that is right, but he has not done it, that's all.

Mrs. J. Well, I'm very sorry, however, for Margaret Beal and her sister, and that neat young creature, Esther.

Betty. Why, what are you sorry about, Mrs. Jennings?

Mrs. J. Oh, I hear there has been a fine to do. You know, I cannot tell any thing but what they tell me; this is what I hear. Two or three days before the uncle went off, says he to Esther, says he, 'we can't agree, and so we must differ;' and Esther said something coaxing, that

could not be made out; but that did not work any change in the uncle; for he went off just the same.

Betty Smith (laughing.) Dear, dear; why, Mrs. Jennings, the world's just the same as it was when you and I were young; not a bit better, that I see. I don't believe a word of their quarreling; it seemed to me, that nice good-natured old man, was particularly fond of Esther, and I don't doubt but she'll have every shilling he has in the world, and that will be something very handsome; for my master said, by what he could hear, the old gentleman's prejudices against religion were greatly removed, since he had come down. He seemed to speak very high of Mr. Lascelles and his lady; and by what he talked of doing to help the charities here, he must have a pretty fortune.

Mrs. J. Oh, then, I dare say your master will be setting his cap at Miss Esther.

Now Betty Smith had a great deal of plain good sense, and did not intend Mrs. J. to go away with that idea; at the same time it was the thing she had always wished; so she said, " I pray you, Mrs. J., not to have that notion; and, above all, never to say that I helped you to it; it would be very unbecoming in me, my master's servant, to be meddling in such

matters. So I pray you not to carry away such a report as this from me, Mrs. J. now mind you, I never said it; and you are the first person I ever heard say it, and now mark me for I tell you in time, if I should hear it, I will go strait to Mr. Lascelles and tell him that you are the person that set it about the parish; for I would not leave my place for something." Mrs Jennings was rather frightened at Betty Smith's manner,for she coloured up very high with the exertion; so she said, "Oh, dear me, Mrs Smith, I would not do you an ill turn for the world, and good morning to you;" for she was glad to get off.

Just at that moment, in came her master; he saw that something was the matter, and requested to know it. Betty kept looking about in her own peculiar manner, and then up at him in distress. "Why Betty, what can that foolish woman have been saying to you, to vex you so sadly."—"Sir, she have vexed me, and that is true;" and Betty told her master the whole story from beginning to end. He smiled. "Well, Betty, and what harm is there in all this; why should you be so very much fluttered? suppose I were to think of Esther Humphries, would there be any thing wrong in it?" "Dear me, no master, not at all; but I know

it would be wrong in me to meddle in such matters." "You are very right. I should think such interference an improper liberty, thinking on you as I do, Betty. Yet faithfully attached to my interests, and travelling, as I think and hope, to the same blessed country, I should not scruple to speak to you of such an affair; and to prove the sincerity of what I say, I will tell you, that I have thought of Esther Humphries, and I am happy to tell you her mother knew this eight months since, though it has never been mentioned to her; but it has been a great relief to my mind, since her uncle came down that I had mentioned it. I have only waited to free myself of every encumbrance before I married, and to be enabled to keep another servant under you, so that I may never part with you, my faithful Betty, while I live. Now, you who know so well what is proper, will see the propriety of not mentioning what I have said to you." "Oh, master, you are all goodness, that you should think about me. I am sure I don't deserve it; I don't say I have not been an honest servant, master, for I have; I won't tell any lies about it; but, that you should reward me so kindly, it is more than I could expect. It is my good God has put it into your heart.

All I can do, master, is to pray for you; and, if God hears my prayer, you will be very happy, master."

While Betty was thus pouring out the gratitude of her heart, and Michael listening to the honest effusion, he was casting about in his mind, to know in what way he could best serve her. He still thought, that to retain her, would be happiest for him and for herself, though the very warmth of her gratitude made him fear, that unless the kitchen folks were kind, her life would not be as happy as it had been: but he said to himself, that I must leave; circumstances will prove whether I should do Betty a service. The postman brought a letter of grateful thanks from Mr. B. we will give the reader a sight of it.

"Dear Sir. You know I left you under the old oak in the home close, and that you promised never to forget Jonathan Brownrigg. It's true I was obliged to ask this favour of you; because you seem to have a knack of forgetting all the good deeds you perform, and I never heard you speak of any man whom you obliged. Now observe me, If you choose to be silent respecting me, I shall not follow that plan; but tell all the folks that know me, how well you received me, and what a comfortable apartment you

destined for me; but I will not say, though I do feel very grateful, that this is the cause of my writing to you. No, Mr. Kemp, I want you to tell me whether, in your village, there is such a thing as a bit of land to be disposed of; free land, mind me. I should like to build myself a very comfortable small house. It must be pretty near the church, for I cannot afford to keep a carriage; and, if I can coax my sister Mary and Esther and her aunt Beal, to leave the old place, and come to me, I shall be quite comfortable. I have said a word or two to my little Peggy; who was so distressed at the thoughts of losing her cross old master, that I have consented to bring her down with me; but all this is premature, till I know whether you can get the ground. You had better say nothing of this to my sisters; there is no need to unsettle them; I shall write to them by this post. Pray remember me to Betty Smith, and tell her that I have thought a great deal about her since I came away, and that I hope she'll not engage herself rashly, for she is a particular favourite of mine. I almost fell out on the road with a sad democrat, who is ready to govern the nation, and has not yet learned to govern himself. I asked him what it took to set up in his trade? He

was ready to burst with passion, and inquired what I meant? I told him, that after my mind, it required a great deal of assurance, as much conceit, and very little sense, to reform the nation. I was certain there was not a pot boy in my neighbourhood, who had not a notion of it; that, for my own part, I kept but one maid, and was out of business; and that I found, to govern my small establishment, and make the most of the little property I have saved, took as much sense as I was master of; but, no doubt, there were men in every alley in London, who would be willing to do Parliament work, and to change places with the Prime Minister; but the worst of it is, you see, Sir, you can't all govern; some of you must obey; and that takes more sense than is lodged in the brain of any democrat. Now you may be sure he did not hear all this patiently; but I pinned him down to it, and told him that he might tell his friends at the club he had done that day what he never had done before, he had listened to the conversation of another. "And pray, Sir," said he, fiercely, "what do you know of me?" I told him, that when a man knew one democrat, he knew the whole party; that in that respect, they resembled a very different assembly; they all spoke the

same language, but that language was discontent; that if it were possible to grant them their wishes, they would be angry with the condescension. Luckily the coach stopped, and without one sign of amity, we parted. I know such a nest of them not far distant from my house, that if there was any rising I should not think my quarters the safest; but, however, they shall never make me hold my tongue; for who can tell, Sir, but one may have the happiness to bring them back to a sense of their duty. At least, the design is a good one, and deserves encouragement. When first these fellows made their appearance, and showed a willingness to mend the affairs of state, Mr Pitt very sensibly took cognizance of all their meetings; and I believe such was his vigilance, that he was thoroughly well acquainted with all the mischief. Now they may growl; but I think they are past biting. In the hope that I shall soon hear from you, and gain some intelligence respecting my estate,

I remain your obliged
and faithful servant,
JONATHAN BROWNRIGG."

P. S.—If there is any thing I can do for you in the city, be sure to let me know.

Michael was pleased with this letter;

he was a warm friend to government, but he was a little at a loss how to answer it, for his habits were entirely rustic, and he was aware of his deficiency in letter-writing; so, as in all difficulties, he went to Mr. Lascelles, and shewed him the letter, which very much pleased him; for he said, "Though a good subject is not always a good Christian, yet he must doubt the piety of those who rebelled against the powers that be. He said, it was easy to call this cant, and to settle the business, but he must ever regard it as a serious evil, and was astonished how any man who had tasted that the Lord is gracious, and knew the powers of the world to come, could delight in opposition for opposition's sake. As he continued to read Brownrigg's letter, he said, "He is a plain man, but there seems sense and benevolence about him, and he appears to be very grateful, Mr. Kemp, for your kindness. I really think he might be an acquisition to us, and certainly must be a comfort to those poor creatures, Mary and her sister. I do not know the cause of their long separation, but it seems they have not met before for years."—"I have never heard, Sir," said Michael; "I know that he had never seen Esther till he came down here, and that her father died

when she was very young; and some ladies, in whose service he was, were very kind to the child, and had her instructed in all that was plain and useful." Mr. Lascelles, who understood human nature well, saw that Michael dwelt with pleasure on this part of his discourse; and though he did not observe upon it, he laid it aside in his mind, intending to compare other parts of his conduct. He had long thought that Michael ought to marry, because he saw that home was not delightful to him except when he was busy; that there was a loneliness in his dwelling, which, to a man who had always been in a family, must have a depressing effect. There was one part of Michael's character which Mr. Lascelles had yet to learn: he did not put on fine feelings, but he had plenty of them when occasion called them forth, and his usual habits were simple and natural; every object that presented itself to Michael's mind seemed to stand single; if they had been combined, they might often have misled him. Two very prominent subjects had that morning presented themselves to his thoughts, the removal of Mr. B. to the village, and his own settlement in life, and these had a natural connection, and in the eye of the world would have hinged upon each other; but with Mi-

chael they were as distinct as the conquest of Peru and Magna Charta. His preference for Esther had arisen entirely from the modesty of her appearance, from her industrious habits, her duty to her mother, and her quiet deportment in the house of God. There was no light wandering during service, no giddy gossipping before or after; her arm sustained her mother through the church-yard to the church, and the same respect was again offered when she quitted it; the other young people would be gathering in groups at one another's houses, but Esther stood an isolated being, except when she spoke to Fanny Meredith, or kissed little Michael as they passed from the porch together; and had Michael followed her home, he had been yet more gratified, for it was the habit of that cottage, as soon as they came from the church, to have the tea and the great Bible, and to recollect all that had been said in the sermon. "Now, aunt, do you try and remember the divisions, and I will remember the beginning if I can; and you, mother, take the application, and then we shall pretty near have it all, and if we can make it out together, I can write it down; and then what a rich store we shall have, for Mr. Lascelles's are beautiful sermons." As Esther was

saying this one Sunday, she saw her aunt smile, and she heard her say, "That's no matter;" and then she saw her shake her head, and heard her go on, saying, "No, no." At last Esther took courage, and she said, "Aunt, what is that?" Her aunt smiled again: "What do you want to know, Esther?"—"I want to know what you meant, aunt, when you said, it was no matter."—"Why, child, I meant that the beauty of the sermon was no matter to us? Are we better for it? Do we feel that the Holy Spirit carries it home to the heart? or do we hear as though we heard not? Do we go away, and forget what manner of beings we are. My poor dear man used to say, 'Margaret, we shall have a deal to account for, you and I; we have not been left in our ignorance, we have been well taught.'" It was thus that these good people endeavoured inwardly to digest what they had heard, and it is likely there was not a house in that village where the instructions of the good pastor were collected with more diligence; and what was the effect? It was this: the text on Sunday was, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." If work was slack, and Esther began to grow a little uneasy at having nothing to do,

and to fear that she should become burdensome to her kind aunt, she would refer her to the text, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." "Yes, aunt, but I should be unhappy to injure you."—"What did the reverend say, child? Did not he bid us be content with a state of dependence?"—"Yes, but, aunt, it would not be my duty to stay here if I was likely to become burdensome to you."—"Come, Esther, what says the Big Book? 'He that believeth shall not make haste,' that is to say—" Here Mary smiled. "You must go to the Big Book again, Margaret"—"Tarry thou the Lord's leisure, be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart." It were indeed an endless job to tell the reader all the Scripture references of these good people; this will suffice to show how they lived upon their Sunday's food through the week, and endeavoured to regulate their practice by the preaching of their excellent pastor.

Margaret Beal received an affectionate brotherly letter from Mr. Brownrigg, and as the latter part was characteristic, we will copy it. "I think you women must miss me sadly; there is something unnatural in a house where there is no male governor, but I've no thoughts of intruding on you

at present. Tell Esther that I desire she'll hold up her head and have a proper pride, for I think, as my niece, and one for whom I shall certainly provide, she has no right to humble to the Miss Jennings' or any of the misses around. I have a great regard for Esther, and I wish her to consider me as a friend; I have sent her by the coach some cloth to make her a pelisse, and as she is so handy with her needle and scissors, I suppose she will be able to make it up for herself. Tell Mr. Kemp, that if I should wish to come and see you again, I hope he will let me my old lodgings. I began to get used to him and Betty, and was very comfortable there; but I had Peggy at home waiting for me, who did every thing she could to get things in order against my return, and I do not well know how to part with her, though I think I shall make some change in my way of life. But one thing I shall never change, in true attachment to you, to Mary, and to Esther.

Yours. J. B."

They were greatly pleased with the kindness of this letter. "But dear me," said Margaret, "my poor brother and his proper pride. Do you think, Mary, he ever reads the Scriptures?"—"Why no, sister, I fear not; and if he does, it is with a view

to confirm himself in his own opinions, or to perform a duty to satisfy his conscience; and I am very certain he will never think of applying the condemnatory part of the passages to his own state, he would never acknowledge that the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; nor does he believe, that whatsoever was written aforetime, was written for his instruction."

Esther. My dear mother, my dear aunt, I am very hopeful about my uncle, only let us be careful to give him no needless offence.

Mary. Well, Eshter love, you're in the right, there's no need to offend; I am sure, if you speak to my brother in kindness and affection, he is not a man to harden himself against you.

Margaret. Well, 'tis a very remarkable thing how some people do forget; I thought, that when people had been almost turned out of doors, they must have owned that there was some deep prejudice against real religion.

Mary only smiled, and repeated that text, "He hath blotted out my iniquities, as a cloud and as a thick cloud, my transgressions."

Margaret. True, child, and you do right in remembering, that "his arm is not shortened, neither is his ear heavy." But

who is that at the door?" Margaret rose and opened it: it was Fanny Meredith, with her boy at her side, and the baby in her arms. "Esther love, I called upon you to ask a great favour; my good man says, if he could get any one to take care at home, he would take me to see my father and mother for two days." The affair was settled by Mary Humphries promising to go; for poor Esther had seen so little of life, and being naturally timid, she was silent when the charge was proposed to her, and her mother, who knew her well, immediately offered to supply her place. So on the morrow, in a tilted cart, Fanny Meredith, with her kind good man and her little ones, set out on their expedition; and they did not go empty-handed, for Michael had ordered Betty Smith to put up a basket with varieties of the farm produce, and there was a label on the handle "For my good mother, with Michael Kemp's duty." Perhaps there are few pleasures so pure as revisiting the scenes of our early days, and Fanny felt it in its full force, for she was a warm-hearted young creature, and scarcely met a face that did not smile upon her in friendship, and Joe came out to meet her in his best clothes. It was a delightful welcome, that of the mother; there was no drawback, no

censure—it was honest approval and gratitude to God, recalling past mercies; and the welcome to the little ones was most cordial. They were engaging children in themselves, and "they are my Fanny's," gave them a double tie. Joe was out the greater part of the day at the nurseryman's with his father, so that the fond mother and the duteous daughter had time to recall every particular, and to converse with the most delightful freedom. But the visit to the rectory was a pleasure stored in Fanny's heart, and it was reciprocal; for during her residence there, she had conducted herself so sweetly, that she was beloved by all: she was a happy compound of good-humour regulated by principle; and the children too had their full share of welcome, and enjoyed themselves without reserve. Among other inquiries, Mrs. Potter was not forgotten, and she was found somewhat improved by her late misfortune. It was a seasonable relief, that which Mr. Walker brought her, and the friendship of Mrs. Tucker was a "continual dropping which is said to be better than a hasty shower." This pleasant little woman was often sending some trifle that she knew would be acceptable, and held intercourse with Mr. Walker as to its application. It was one day,

while Fanny was drinking tea in Miss Walker's little boudoir, and that young lady was pleasing herself in fitting out the young Stephen in a plaid vest and tunic, that a message was brought from below that a gentleman wished to see Mr. Walker; and if he was not at home, the person could leave his message with any branch of the family who could see him. Miss Sophia Walker was a timid girl, and could not think of going to him alone, and was rejoicing that she had Fanny with her, when the person in question walked in, stiffly bending to Miss Walker, and apologizing for intrusion on her privacy. Fanny looked up, and thought she knew his countenance; he looked at Fanny, and thought the same thing, when he thus addressed Miss Walker:

"I am very little known, madam to your excellent father, but we were both interested for a person in this parish, and I am come expressly on the part of a friend of mine to serve an object not very worthy I believe, Mrs. Potter. I know not how she is going on, her conduct must regulate mine; if she is in some measure reformed, I bring what will be very acceptable; but Mrs. Tucker is fixed in her resolution to afford her no relief unless she is punctual at church, and has entirely

changed her habits. I believe, young lady, I had better reserve my inquiries till I have the honour and pleasure of speaking personally with your father, or perhaps your brother. Is he at home?"—"I think he is, Sir."

Miss Walker rang the bell. "Is Mr. Edmund at home?"—"Yes, madam."—"Will you say a gentleman wishes to speak with him?" Fanny sat playing with her children, and at last said, "I believe, Sir, I think, Sir, I know a very nice girl who will be very glad to hear that I have seen you, and seen you well—Esther Humphries."—"Ah, then I am right; it is Mr. Kemp's sister I am addressing."—"Yes, Sir, my name is Fanny Meredith, and your's, I believe, is Brownrigg." He bowed. Perhaps, Mrs. Meredith, you can tell me something of Mrs. Potter"—"I have not been long here, Sir."

Brownrigg. But by what I understand, your family live very near.

F. "That is true, Sir, but I never was at the Lion since I was eight or nine years old, I think; but I heard my mother mention that poor Mrs. Potter had been in some distress, and that a friend had settled her affairs for her."—"Yes, yes, there was something done, I believe, and more would be done if we could be certain that

the good lady was not fond of liquid fire." Fanny said, she would make any inquiries, and at this moment Mr. Edmund Walker entered, and Mr. Brownrigg requested the honour of speaking with him for a few moments; but they did not quit the room without taking notice of Fanny and the lovely little ones. Mr. Edmund W. knew little or nothing of Mrs. Potter, though his father had described the meeting with Mr. Brownrigg at Walworth; and so accurate had been his description, that Mr. Edmund thought he should have known Mr. Brownrigg any where. "If you wish to go to the Lion I will step with you, and you may judge for yourself." He acceded to this proposal, and Mrs. Potter, who was in the bar, said to a servant who stood by, "I wonder what brings Mr. Edmund Walker here, no good, I dare say." She had not time for a second observation, before Mr. Brownrigg begged for the honour of speaking with her.

Mrs. Potter. Oh, Sir, to be sure, Sir; private business, Sir?

Mr. Brownrigg. Why yes, Madam, perhaps we might as well walk to a private room; do you not think so, Sir?

Mr. Edmund bowed, and Mrs. Potter sniffed and tossed her head, and they followed her to a very respectable back room, where

hung a sword, a plaid cloak, and on the table some volumes of poems and several periodical publications. "Pray sit down, Sir; this is the captain's room, and here, Sir, you may say all your say, for there's nobody wont come here, for the captain's gone out, and this is always his private room when he's here; for, as he says, there is not such pleasant lodgings in all P—— as he gets at the Lion." How long Mrs. Potter might have gone on repeating the captain's praise of the Lion public-house cannot be known; for Mr. Brownrigg, who was a man of business, and not at all patient under long harangues, stopped her with, "No doubt, Madam, the captain has made a judicious choice; but as this gentleman is unknown to us, we will, if you please, proceed to business."

Mrs. P. Oh dear, yes, Sir, to be sure; shall I fetch an inkstand?

Mr. B. "No, Madam, I thank you, my memory will serve me;" and here Mr. Brownrigg buttoned his coat tight, pulled off his gloves, rubbed his hands, and after keeping his eyes cast down for a few moments, he looked full on Mrs. Potter, and asked her if she went to church.

Mrs. P. To church, Sir; dear me, what a very strange question—To church! Pray

Sir, what business can it be of your's, Sir, whether I goes to church?

Mr. B. None in the world, Madam; but as the person from whom I come makes *that question*, and your reply, the foundation of some very important business, I just took the liberty to ask it; but should it be unpleasant to you to answer it, my business is ended. (And here he drew on his gloves.) I wish you a *very* good afternoon.

Mrs. P. Dear me, (and she looked with an eye of scrutiny on Mr. B.) Don't I remember you?

Mr. B. Really, Madam, that is for you to determine, and not very material—*I* remember *you*.

Mrs. P. Are you not Jonathan Brownrigg?

Mr. B. I was christened Jonathan, but your uncle used to call me Mr. Brownrigg.

Mrs. P. Well then, Mr. Brownrigg, I'd be glad to know what's the reason as you wishes to know if I'm always at the church?

Mr. B. No reason whatever, Madam! I wish you a very good afternoon; (and he was making towards the door, when she said in a tone half pettish, half coaxing,) "Why, Mr. Brownrigg, if you've got any thing to say for my good, I'll willingly listen."

B. No, Madam; till you have the goodness to answer my inquiry, I have no message further.

Mrs. P. Well, to be sure I'd be glad to know what you're come about. Why, let me see; why, I thinks I was at the church last Sunday was fortnight. (She rings the bell, the maid comes in)—"Judy, wasn't I at church last Sunday *fortnight*."

Judy. I'm sure, Ma'am, I can't say; I havn't been here but a week last Saturday.

Mrs. P. Dear, no, girl; no more you have, I forgot that. Well, it's no matter, but I'm sure I was there last Sunday fortnight.

Brownrigg. Some particular occasion, I suppose; perhaps you stood godmother, Madam?

Mrs. P. Dear, how came you to know that, Sir? I did, to be sure, for the first time.

Edmund Walker looked up, and said, "that was very extraordinary." And Mrs. P. looked round with inquiry, as to what was extraordinary; and Mr. B. looked the same inquiry. "Why, Sir, my father is very particular, I know, upon this subject." Here Mrs. P. broke in—"Your father is particular enough upon all subjects, Master Edmund." E. Walker, whose mind was of a very superior cast, was not at all disposed to enter into an argument with such a per-

son as Mrs. Potter. But Mr. B. said, "In what is your father particular, Mr. Walker?" and to him the young man replied, "In not admitting persons to stand who do not frequent the church."—"Very right, very right," said Mr. B., and he fell back in his chair with his eyes fixed full on Mrs. P., to her no small mortification.

Mrs. P. Well, I do think that this is the most extraordinariest thing I ever heard, that a man should come all the way from Lunnen to know whether I goes to church;" —and Mr. Brownrigg, who could hardly help laughing at the struggle between Mrs. P.'s interest and her temper, wished her a very good afternoon for the third time, and left the house. As the gentlemen walked on together, Edmund Walker recollected that a neighbouring clergyman had offered to take the duty at the time Mrs. Potter was at church, so that it was accounted for. "Well, I have learnt thus much," said Mr. B., "by my visit to Mrs. Potter; she is not the least improved, and the person for whom I make the inquiry was willing, in case she had been, to have left the whole of her late uncle's property to her: but it appears to me, that she is saucy enough without wealth, and I shall advise sending her a mall yearly present, but by no means to nrich her."— "And now, Sir," said Mr.

B., " I must beg you to present my respects to your father, and I have no occasion to trouble you further." So they parted, not without inquiring where old Kemp lived. " I wish you had asked me before," said Mr. E., " we were exactly opposite his cottage when we were at the Lion."—" I thank you, I shall easily find it." Sarah opened the door, when Mr. B. knocked at it. " I see I am right," said he; " Is your mother at home?"—" No, Sir, she is just gone to see a sick neighbour, but she will be in presently." So Mr. B. seated himself. " I am going some way off, and I shall be very likely to see a brother of your's; have you any message for him?"—" My love, if you please, Sir, and we should all be happy to see him this way."—" Have not you another brother?"—" Yes, Sir, two; I have one quite grown up, my brother Joe; but I don't expect you will see him, Sir; but if you will please to write down on paper any thing you have to say."—" No, little maid, I have nothing very particular, but I should have liked to carry some news."—" Oh, Sir, my sister is here, thank you."—" True, I met her at Mr. W.'s" As Mr. Brownrigg rose to go, Mrs. Kemp returned, and Mr. B. explained in few words, " that he should soon see her son, and would very gladly convey any tidings."—" I thank you,

Sir, only say the Lord prospereth us on every side; that Joseph is a very good lad, and I would be glad of a service for my Jane, if he should hear of one. We are all in good health, Sir, and that is no small mercy."

Brownrigg, though he had been often angry with his sister for speaking of the Lord and his mercy, was now in a temper to receive any communication patiently. Mrs. Kemp was so mild, so neat, and so pretty, that he could forgive a little enthusiasm, and he looked benevolently, and promised to think of all her pleasant messages. He well knew Michael's sentiments, he saw they were all agreed, and he did not object; he only begged they would not oblige him to speak in set phrases, and to lift up his eyes, as though he was always praying, and Margaret Beal said in her last converse with him, that till his heart went with his eye, she should be very sorry to see any thing of that sort. "There is no doubt, brother, many hypocrites are found looking upward; but when we remember what we look towards when the eye is thus employed, surely, my dear brother, you need not be so very angry that a traveller, who has his home in view, should sometimes cast an eye towards it." "No, no, Margaret, 'tis not that they should look up, but that they should expect to be thought

the better for it, and have their hands in your pocket while they sigh and whine." "You are a very unlucky man, brother, *I* never saw such persons." The fact was, Brownrigg had spent his life in the exercise of formal duty, and had never inquired whether his weekly visits to the house of prayer had any other end than the repetition of words, without any reference to the heart. He was strictly moral and honest in word and deed, but he never thought of God in his dealings with man. If he read his Bible, it was with no farther end than to do a duty, and of course it was heavy work; and to see a person lift their eyes when they read that passage in the Psalms, he thought it stuff, and hypocrisy, little knowing how two or three lines of Scripture trusted in and believed in, could comfort a mind cast down and distressed, and when thus applied, becomes a balm to the wounded conscience. But he was a whole man, he had never been pierced by the arrows of conviction, and had not any need of consolation. What *he* felt not he thought no one beside felt; and what would have been hypocrisy in him, he consequently thought would be the same in another. He was full of kindness to his fellow men, and would have exerted himself to serve any one; but then all

these actions were viewed by him as claims to a seat in heaven. But let it be remembered, "it cost more to redeem a soul, he must let that alone for ever."

Michael had made some impression on the mind of Brownrigg, not by conversation, but by conduct: he had heard of his allowing voluntarily one hundred pounds per annum to Mrs. Finch, and while he slept at the Brow, he saw the quiet and respectable order of his dwelling, the obedience of his servants, and their love to him; and all this pleased him, because he understood it, but why he should make them all assemble to prayers he could not see. Could not they all pray in their own chambers? He did not quite like that, it seemed like boasting of his religion. To be brief, the *appearance* of piety was offensive to him, every acknowledgment of God he held to be cant; but every kind notice of his fellow-men, even though publicly done, he approved. How plainly in this man did enmity appear—sad to say, enmity against him who formed him, against him who redeemed him, and yet he would have said in the spirit of those whom our Saviour mentions, as replying at the last day, "Lord, when saw we thee, &c. &c." Like Saul, he persecuted ignorantly, and thought he did God service, he flung the raiment

of hypocrisy at all, because he found one or two hypocrites. Thus it is frequently seen the tares and the wheat are blended, "let both grow together until harvest;" then shall ye discover between the righteous and the wicked, &c. &c.

Journies are frequently fatiguing in themselves, and unless full of novel interest, are doubly so in recital. We will therefore suppose Brownrigg entering the cottage of his sister, and anticipating the pleasure of seeing his niece, to whom he had become greatly attached; however, there was no one at home but Margaret, and he was greatly disappointed to find Esther and her mother out, and half angry to be told they were gone to a lecture at the rectory. He sat fretting and fidgetting, and the more displeased, the more his conscience told him he had no right to be angry. "What, don't ye go to church on Sunday? Why, is not that enough? What's the good of having the head crammed with sermons? I am sure, for my part, I can never remember them I hear on Sundays." Margaret was silent, she saw it was no time to reply; but, says the zealous reader, ought she not to have replied? ought she not to have pleaded that cause, in which she was so deeply interested? "There is a time for every thing," says

the wise man, and in nothing is the time more to be studied than in religious counsel. To convince an angry man, it is wrong to be angry, involves no small difficulty; but to remove prejudice, and anger at once, is a hopeless undertaking, so she simply said, "I am sure, brother, they would not have gone out if they had expected you;" and this little speech, though it made no impression at the moment, sunk upon his heart like an effort of kindness; and if it did not entirely remove his displeasure, he felt it was unjust to be angry with Margaret, who was at home; and while he was planning what he should say to the stragglers, they returned, and Michael Kemp with them. Reader, you have doubtless seen a heavy cloud pass over your head, and a brilliant sun break from behind it in splendour. Poor Brownrigg was so pleased that he was obliged to quit the room, after having shaken hands with Michael, and bid welcome to his sister and niece, and stepping into the garden, relieved his mind by these short exclamations. "Yes, yes, that will do, I like that very much; well, there's no harm, some at the ball, some at the races, some at church; there's no harm at all, only I do not like people to be over religious." Having spent his first emotions of joy, he returned to the cottage, leaving

Margaret in some surprise at his sudden good humour. Michael possessed himself very well, and said, "I am glad, Sir, I called this evening; perhaps you will do me the favour of accompanying me home." "Why indeed, unless this cottage has been enlarged, Mr. Kemp, I must beg a bed of you;" and he fully expected that Michael would unfold the mystery of his visit. But no, not a word: he little knew the character of our hero, who knowing Brownrigg was rich, and to have made a friend of him in the present instance would have been asking a fortune, and this was a step of which he was incapable. No, he regarded Esther simply for her own worth, and since he found himself not unacceptable to her, had consulted no being but her mother. Greatly was Brownrigg disappointed at Michael's persevering silence, and he hurried down next morning from the Brow, that he might gain intelligence from his Sisters. "Very odd, very extraordinary, I think" he muttered to himself as he walked along, "the girl has no father; why, I'm her nearest male relation. Very odd; very extraordinary."

Esther met him at the cottage door, and told him how glad she was to see him. He took the first opportunity of her quitting the room, to question his sisters what

that young man was there for last night. "I believe brother," said Margaret, "I believe he has a kindness for our Esther." "Well, well, I have no objection; but, should not he have spoken to me? Was not that natural?" "Oh, yes; quite natural, I think," said Margaret, smiling; "but—" "But what?" "Mr. Kemp would never speak to you, brother." "And pray, why not?" "Because you are a rich man, brother." "Who says I am a rich man?" "The world says so." "And suppose I am, is that a reason why I am to be treated with no respect?"

Mary Humphries now went up to her brother, and taking his hand, said, "My dear Jonathan, I'm sure Mr. Kemp had but one reason for not speaking to you; he thought it would seem as if he expected a portion with our Esther. Oh, brother, he is not a common young man, I do assure you, he's got such a generous heart." "Well, well, I don't understand it; it's a great deal too fine for me. I should like him to have spoken to me. I tell you, I like to be consulted; I've a right."

Mary. Most certainly you have. But there is an extreme in most minds; and Mr. Kemp has certainly erred, through fear of selfishness. I wish you could see it in the right light, and then I think you

would esteem it. (*B.*) "Well, my dear; well, perhaps I should; and, if he don't choose to speak, why then, you know, I've nothing to answer."

Mary. Only let me beg, brother, that you will not be angry with them.

B. Oh, no child.

Esther came in soon after and put an end to the conversation.

Some weeks passed, during which time Brownrigg was busily engaged in planning his cottage. It was certainly not very elegant, but very neat and convenient; but he was much put out, with the prospect of Esther's leaving her mother's wing, for he had made up his mind to have her as an inmate; and, though he loved his sisters, he thought them rather of the gravest. He was a man naturally of a gay spirit; and to be obliged always to think of his words, before he uttered them, was to him slavery. He loved dearly to say a droll thing, and join the laugh it occasioned; he loved to communicate freely, and to be confided in and consulted in return: but the modesty of Esther, and the generosity of Michael, were such barriers as time only could remove; and, after some moments' cogitation, he would close it by uttering aloud, "Well I can't help it; if they won't, they won't." In the mean

time, Margaret could not but regret that her dear Esther was in danger, unintentionally, of offending; and Michael, whose integrity they could not hope to shake, was likely to pursue his own silent course, without any interruption. The person most disposed to break the spell was Margaret. She could not bear that they should lose from foolish delicacy, so she went to the Brow Farm, with a determination to speak openly to Michael. She found him at home; and, wondering at her visit, for she was an old woman, and the walk to the Brow was very fatiguing, so he offered her a glass of alder wine, and a slice of seed cake, and in an anxious voice, hoped there was nothing amiss? "Nothing at all, nothing at all; only I want to prevent mischief?" When Michael understood the cause of her visit, he promised to remove Mr Brownrigg's vexation as far as he was concerned; so in the evening of that very day, he sought Brownrigg and was completely explicit with him. This last inquired why he did not tell him all this long since? "I believe, Sir, you guess," said Michael; "I have enough to keep a wife, and it is not my desire to enrich my self by impoverishing others. You have been very kind to Esther, Sir, and I cannot desire more than her affection: it is

the best fortune a wife can bring." "Well, all this is very fine; but, as I don't chuse my niece to live completely on your bounty, I intend giving her a thousand pounds; and you either have half of it in your business, or I will secure it all to her. What say you?" "I think, Sir, it will be far best that it should be secured. So the matter was settled; and Mr. B., whose delicacy in conferring a benefit, was as great as theirs in receiving it, had the necessary business settled without farther consultation.

The Jennings's had long been endeavouring to get sociable with Esther. They had called to ask favours of her, and had pressed her to come and visit them; but all this was too sudden, and Esther's plain sense was frequently puzzled to know what they could have in view; but she lent them patterns of different things with the frankest kindness, without her ever being informed for what purpose they were wanted. At length Margaret Beal said, "I really think, Esther, dear, that those Miss Jennings's are going to set up in business; and, if you don't take care they will win all your custom." Esther thought it extraordinary; but she had nothing of that selfishness in her nature, which is necessary to persons in business.

The secret of this indifference was, that she built her hopes of success where she rested every other hope, and she knew that the arm on which she leaned was able to support her, and she formed no other dependance.

In the mean time, Michael had called on his sister, and almost surprised her with his unreserved confidence. She persuaded him to end the business shortly, and said to him, "I am sure it will be happier for you, my love, to bring her home soon, and I see no reason why you should defer it."

There was that in Michael's character, which led him to consider every human being with whom he stood connected; the law of kindness was not only upon his lips, but it was in his heart; and he began to consider whether the step he was about to take, might not affect Betty Smith's happiness; whether she might like to live where there was a mistress; and, after some little hesitation, as she was one morning making his tea, he said, "Betty, you have been a great comfort to me." I'm very glad Sir; "I'm sure you have been a kind friend to me, Sir." "It's not unlikely, Betty, that some change may take place in my life, which perhaps might change yours, and affect

your comfort." "Sir, master," said Betty, and she looked up in her own peculiar manner, "No change can take place in your life, or mine, without the peculiar guidance of the Lord; and I'm not one, master, to carve for myself. I remember a great gentleman said, in a book I read once, that 'when God's people do carve for themselves, they generally cut their fingers?' No Sir, whatsoever is done in the earth, he is the doer of it. I am not afraid of him, Sir, nor of you, my master; you'll both take care of me, I know." This sweet confidence of Betty Smith's opened the heart of Michael, and he told her his intentions. "Well, dear me," said she, "and I'm glad of it; for often when I've seen you looking at the fire on a winter's evening, I've thought to myself, dear me, I be no company for him; and when you bid me sit down, I've been ashamed, and thought I was not proper company. Dear me, Sir, I'm very glad; dear me, Sir, I think you've done very proper; they are particular nice people, Sir; a religious family, very kind hearted, old friends of mine, Sir; companions, I may say, of my youth. Ye see, master, I love ye, I'm sure, like my son;" and the tears streamed down Betty's cheeks; "and I'm glad as my life, that ye are like to settle so com-

fortable ; and I dare say as the good lady, your mother, is glad too." Michael smiled. "Why, Betty, my mother as yet knows nothing of it." Betty looked surprised. "Why, to be sure," said she, accounting to herself for this omission, "It is a long way off;" and, after a little hesitation, she began to smile. "Well, Betty, what are you thinking of?" *(Betty.)* "The Miss Jennings's. I was thinking what Miss Louisa, and Miss Tiny would say, when they have quite lost ye." "Lost me, Betty!" "Why, yes, master; they certainly counted to get ye. I should have been sorry for that, master, and I think you'd have been sorry in the end." Michael smiled, and hoped Miss Jennings's would be quite as well provided for.

He now began to consider, as Mr Lascelles had always been so friendly to him and Esther, that he ought to repose some confidence in him. He knew this was an awkward task, and almost shrank from it; however he was determined he should have it from himself; so he walked across the fields, and beat his way to the Rectory. He had no idea that any one had heard of it out of their own family; but, perhaps they might, ere long. As he drew near the avenue of trees, which we described as approaching Mr Lascelles's residence, he

was met by James Brown, whose steady course did honour to the principles which he had embraced. "And how is it we never meet, Michael?" Michael replied that "he knew not: for that he should always be glad to see him." "But where is your master? I've a little business for him." "I saw him a few minutes since and he passed to the house."

He was admitted to the study; and, after some slight apology for intruding his affairs he unfolded his business, and begged the prayers of his beloved pastor. Mr. Lascelles was exceedingly pleased, he thought the union so well assorted; and said, "I suppose the uncle, Mr Brownrigg, is acquainted with your intention?" "Yes, Sir, and he has behaved very kindly, and promised to give Esther £1000." "Very good,; that is as it should be. It will assist you in your business." "I rather think not, Sir, as I should not wish it in my hands. The Brow has hitherto paid its expenses, and something over for a rainy day. I am always afraid, lest I should be in haste to get rich. I have been so happy in my middle state, that I fear advancement, lest I should lose my dependance." "Very right," replied his reverend friend; "the less a man is loaded, the lighter he walks;

and I believe the love of accumulation increases by indulgence. Money is a more difficult article to manage, than most young people are aware of. I have known persons who have begun by prudence, end in parsimony; and, on the other hand, I have seen liberality degenerate into profusion. Oh, my dear young man, keep your eye fixed on the Saviour; that is the only way to walk consistently."

Michael listened modestly; for though he had long felt this, and long practised it, he was not like some young persons, impatient with the reflection. Counsel was agreeable, especially religious counsel, and he was willing to take here a little, and there a little, and to receive "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" so that he might walk safely, and honourably to the cause of God.

He withdrew with the hearty blessing of the good Mr. Lascelles, and went quietly home to the Farm. He was just ascending the hill, when it struck him that he should do well to call, and have some open conversation with the whole family, with whom he was about to connect himself. He went to Margaret Beal's; and, as she opened the little garden gate, Esther met him. "You were going out." "Yes, but it is not material." "You are

sure of that, Esther."—"Quite sure especially if you——" And she hesitated. Michael turned round, and said, "I'll walk a little way with you. Is your uncle within?" "No; he is gone to his cottage, and I was going to call on a sick neighbour." "Could you take me?" "Yes; and we will speak by the way." "I was coming yesterday to have a little open converse with your family, and to endeavour to settle something."

Esther was silent. She felt, as the period drew nigh, a timid sort of dread, as though she were afraid of change; and Michael looked on her with an eye of inquiry, as though he feared something; when she re-assured him by the following observation: "I have been so happy hitherto, under the guidance of my mother and aunt, that I feel almost afraid of change." Michael interrupted her." "I hope, Esther, you do not repent." She assured him that she did not; but she said, "when she thought of the duties before her, she doubted if she was sufficient to perform them with propriety." "Oh, my dear Esther, sufficiency is of him you know; and this we must not only say, but feel. I think you have evening worship at your house?" — "Surely; always."—"Then, I will step

down again in the evening; I shall be sure to find your uncle then." "Very well;" and her heart beat; for she knew not what he was going to say. She was in mental prayer that all might go well, as they drew near the cottage she was going to. "We must part here; for I am going to assist poor Betty Richardson, to dress her child's burn; for it is such a job Michael." So he bade her farewell till evening, thanked God in his heart for the providence which had brought them together, and walked back to the Brow, where he found Esther's uncle sitting in deep conversation with Betty.

The consciousness of Betty's look, and the archness of Mr Brownrigg's, convinced Michael that their converse had been of him; and, though there was very little curiosity in Michael's character, he looked as though he would say what? and when Betty passed from the room, it was with a sly curtsy, and a look of promise, to know all when the odd old gentleman was gone; but the odd old gentleman was in no hurry to go; and he began, while he kept making a very fine point to his pencil. "How came you, Sir; how came you, I say, to choose poor Esther, my poor niece, Sir, where there are so many fine young ladies?" Michael said, "I hope, Sir, my ser-

vant has not been so foolish as to talk of our neighbours, and to talk folly about them.' "Why, folly; I believe some people's folly, is other people's wisdom. Ha, his it not so, Michael?" "I really cannot understand you, Sir." "Well, no matter; only if I choose to put on my hat, smartly, and with my cane under my arm, to come to see Betty, has any one a right to say nay?"

Michael's understanding was a plain one; he was never fond of jesting; independent of the Divine prohibition. The truth was he had no play of fancy, or imagination, to lead him astray. It might be said of him, "he was a plain man;" so he gave Mr Brownrigg a smile for his jest, and opened his desk, to make some memorandum. Brownrigg, with both hands on the head of his stick, and his hat on his knee with his gloves in it, sat amusing himself with his own thoughts, when hand in hand, walked in at the Brow porch, Michael and his little sister. "Stephen sent the boy, uncle," and tucked into his little vest, he produced a letter. "Very odd," thought his uncle, to send these children; and he took the letter. It was, indeed, a letter from P——; but that Fanny should send them, when she had so often said to Michael, "not to the Brow my love; not

to uncle Michael's." "Betty, take these children home, and tell their mother how they came here."

Michael, who saw his uncle was displeased with him, sidled up to Brownrigg, and began to hang about his chair, as though he wished to secure a friend. Brownrigg, though a bachelor, and a confirmed one, had so much native kindness of heart, that children were sure of his friendship; and the lingering boy found a kind and ready listener to his tale; which though true, had a mixture like most doubtful tales. It was true Fanny had said, "send the boy with this letter;" and the young straggler, afraid to ask, waited the moment his mother left the room, took the letter; and, as little Fanny ran after him, he would not turn back, lest he should be prevented. Brownrigg was pleased with the manly child, and, giving him a bit of paper with a pencil began to amuse him; and, as Betty Smith took up the little girl, and said, "Come Sir," to the boy, his pleading eye was turned on Brownrigg, who said, "tell Mrs. Meredith I will take care of her son." This was not quite his uncle's wish, because he was aware that there had been some artifice; however, as he saw Brownrigg was interested in the child, he permitted Betty Smith to depart with the

girl, after stroking her golden locks, and imprinting a kiss on her little blue-veined forehead. "There, Sir," said little Michael, and began to shew his paper to Brownrigg. But he did not dare to look at his uncle; he knew that he was not pleased, and his uncle spoke not. But the child was very warm-hearted, he could not rest easy; and in the softest tone of infantine endearment, he said, "uncle, uncle Michael." Still, Michael went on writing, and Brownrigg looked up, wondering he did not answer the child. The little one making scrawl after scrawl, endeavouring to bear it manfully; and Brownrigg, with a tenderness unusual to him, tried to make up for the coldness of his uncle, and was unable to comprehend why he should carry it so severely with him.

In a few minutes, as his uncle closed his desk, the infant, unable longer to bear the deprivation of caresses so dear to him, burst into tears, ran across the old kitchen and sobbing most painfully, clung round the neck of his beloved relation.

Brownrigg's mind was working strongly during this scene; he could not understand it, and kept saying to himself, "I hope this man will make my Esther a good husband: he's mortal strict; what has the

poor child done;" and he only waited the absence of the truant boy, to argue the point.

In a short time, Betty Smith returned, and Fanny with her. "My dear brother, so this boy will run away, after all I have said;" and such was the force of early impressions, that the child made no attempt to defend himself; and when he saw his mother, only stretched out his arms, and hid his head in her bosom.

Hardly could Brownrigg restrain himself while the child was present; and, as soon as the mother departed, he exclaimed, "Now, what harm has that pretty boy done? He has brought you a letter which you wanted to see; he has come safely." "Oh, Sir, but that was the doubt, whether he would arrive safely; and beside, the artifice." "Why, really, I cannot see much in it; you may draw the string so tight, that he may break bound; he may find the bonds too heavy, I say, and give you the slip one of these days." "I hope not, Sir; that child is very dear to me." "No doubt, no doubt; your own blood; but don't weary him, I say; don't weary him." *(M.)* "When we consider the importance of truth, and remember that God requires it in the inward parts, we cannot guard infancy too

strongly." "Why, no, no: but, what has the child done? I can't see it." "He endeavoured completely to deceive us; and, if I had not treated him distantly, and made him feel that he could not impose upon me, the success of this little stratagem might have proved fatal to his integrity." "Well, well; you may be right; but I should fear that such severe restraint would make him hate the arm that curbed him." "I trust not, Sir." It did not appear so. I think you saw how fondly he clung to me. I believe the old fable is strictly true, Sir. You remember the boy biting off the ear of his mother, who had foolishly indulged him. I believe it will be generally found, they will esteem those most, and love those longest, who have imposed wholesome restraint upon them." "May be so. I am an old bachelor; and, as I mean to live in a plain, and not on a hill, I shall desire Mrs. Meredith to let this boy come and see me sometimes." "You must not spoil him." "No, no; never fear, we shall make it out very well together;" and, from this time, there was an increasing friendship between the worthy old bachelor, and the infant Michael.

After Brownrigg had departed, Michael carefully revolved in his mind what were

his plans for the evening. He well knew how scanty were the means of Esther's aunt and mother; he knew that in taking Esther, he deprived them of a part of their maintenance, and he had committed the subject to God in prayer; and the last conviction on his mind was, that he ought to provide at least for the mother of his wife. Yet, how to do it without offending their feelings, he knew not. At last it occurred to him, that there was one way in which he might safely evince his care, without wounding that delicacy which he was delighted to perceive in every branch of the family; but we will leave this till the whole family are assembled.

That fine purple shade, which so often characterises our evenings in England, had nearly spread itself over the horizon, save where the last rich crimson hue of the departing sun, blended with the orange on the western side of the village, while the southern was distinguished by the palest tinge of emerald so chaste, so transparent, that no pencil hath yet dared to imitate the unearthly glow. In this state was the sky, when Michael descended from his abode; and, crossing the church-yard path, made his way to the cottage of Margaret Beal.

"I am about to enter on my scene;

there lies, one, whose goodness to me enables me to do what my heart desires to do." This he said, as his eye glanced over the tomb that he had raised to the memory of his master. "How long, or how short my career may be, rests with him, in whose hands are 'the issues of life and death.' What a change must that be, through which he hath passed. How wonderful those scenes, which it hath not entered the heart of man to conceive! Here fear, the fear of death damps every enjoyment; there, all certain, fixed, abiding, comprehending every thing clearly, which we 'now see through a glass darkly;' all love absorbed in the love of Jesus, the author of our bliss! If here, I feel the increasing weight of sin; there, I shall know from what I have been delivered."

In the midst of these deep reflections, as he leant upon the church-yard gate, a tall young man touched his hat to him. "How do you do, Sir; Mr. Kemp, I believe?" "Yes, Sir; I beg your pardon, I do not recollect you." "My name is, James Finch; I believe I have grown since you saw me." "Indeed you are, James; but I am grieved I should not have remembered you; but you are altered in countenance, as well as height." "I was coming to pass a little time with you

if it were convenient; but you were going out, Sir." "I was; but I will step back with you to the Brow, and order you some refreshment; which you can take, while I settle the business I am going on."

The affair thus arranged, Michael returned with a quicker step to the cottage of Margaret Beal. Esther had been listening, for the last quarter of an hour, to the clanking noise of their little gate, and had been deceived more than once; and was as much vexed, as it was in the power of a spirit so gentle to be vexed, at her repeated disappointment; and, as Michael entered the room, Margaret, with more drollery than she often indulged, in her look and manner, said, "So you are come at last." "At last!" said Michael, involuntarily. "Yes," replied Margaret, "poor Esther has got up and down for the last half hour, and looked pale pink at every body." "Dear me, aunt," said Esther. "Well, child, now you look full rose colour." "What harm?" "Surely none," said Michael, kindly taking her hand. "Oh dear, no; but my aunt is so very odd."

This had hardly passed, when Mr. Brownrigg entered. "Have you been waiting for me? Did you expect me?" said he, in a hurried voice. "No, no,

said Margaret, "You are in very good time; Mr. Kemp is but just come." "And I am sorry that I must hasten away," replied he; "for young Finch arrived, just as I left home, and this will oblige me to be rather precipitate on the subject I was about to introduce."

Perhaps it was better for Michael that his time was short; it obliged him to be explicit. He took Esther's hand. "As I have the full consent of all your friends, my dear Esther," and he paused a moment; "And as I trust the blessing of God is upon us, I am looking forward to the completion of my hopes with safe confidence; and it is my prayer, that every one here may be satisfied with the approval they have given me, that no regret may succeed." Here Brownrigg fidgetted; and he thought to himself, "Nonsense; what's all this about?" Michael saw that he was impatient, and it increased his embarrassment. "As in every thing that relates to business, it is best to be clear," said Michael, "I have thought it right to request this little meeting." "Yes, yes;" thought Brownrigg, "These methodists have a clear eye to their own interest; but I will not help him; he shall stammer it all out;" and he sat with a malicious composure. "I am quite aware my dear Mrs.

Beal, that in taking Esther away from you and her mother, I not only deprive you of a great domestic blessing, but of a part of your income. Now, as I am quite able to provide for a wife and family, and have no need of any addition, I beg that the interest of Esther's portion may be applied to your use, my dear madam," turning to Mrs. Humphries, "and that of her kind aunt; and for this reason, it had better be lodged in trust for you, during your joint lives, to descend to Esther, whenever it may please God to call you home. But, in all this I have consulted her, and you will not doubt that this plan fully meets her approbation." Esther's character was of the quiet kind; she could only answer by her tears, and "Oh, yes," whispered in the faintest accent.

Brownrigg was astonished; he was expecting a good sharp look out, and could scarcely believe Michael sincere, till he saw him prepare to leave the cottage; only adding, "I meant to have joined your family worship; but, as James Finch is come, I must hurry home. But Brownrigg was determined to have a word before he went; so he turned to him. "Well, Sir, you are in earnest; you will have nothing to do with Esther's money; you are a proud man I see."

All this was said playfully; but Michael was unused to jesting, and hardly understood it; so he waited in silence. Brownrigg gave him his hand. "Well, I believe you are an honest lad." "I hope so," was Michael's mild reply. But it was hardly possible for two persons to meet, less suited in mind and manner, than Brownrigg and his intended nephew. The one could not live without his jest; the other held it inconvenient, upon scripture principles. Esther, the modest Esther, seemed midway between them. She understood, and valued them both. Beneath this playful exterior, Brownrigg concealed a fund of benevolence; while Michael's gravity was remote from austerity, his every day habits and manners being full of cheerfulness, if not gaiety.

No sooner was the outer gate closed, and the cottage family alone, than Brownrigg exclaimed, "A very extraordinary lad, that! very extraordinary!" And Esther modestly added, "He is, indeed, uncle." But she had no sooner spoken, than she was frightened at her own boldness, and would have recalled the word; "Yet," thought she, "why should I?" So she remained silent. "He is an extraordinary young man," said Margaret Beal; "I remember him, when he first came to this

village." Here she related Michael's history, from his first entrance among them. When she came to that part, where he allowed Mrs. Finch £100 a year, he burst out in his own rapid way. "Nonsense, nonsense; foolish fellow; that will never do. No, no; he will come to poverty. I say he can't afford it; 'tis impossible." "But, my dear brother, he has afforded it; he has done it regularly." "Well, well, child, he may have afforded it: but, if he is to marry Esther, I suppose she is to be maintained. I say the man is a blockhead. Surely, Mrs. Finch should not take this money." "Oh," said Esther, putting her hand in her pocket, "Mr. Kemp gave me a paper;" and she began to examine it. By her increasing colour, her aunt and mother feared something unpleasant. "Esther, child, any thing wrong?" "Oh dear, no, mother;" and she passed it directly to her uncle. "Will you read it Sir?"

Brownrigg put his hand into his pocket, took out his spectacles, rubbed them with his glove; and pulling his collar, as though he would secure free articulation, began,

"Dear Sir. You have always had the goodness to promise, that whenever I wished for experience for my boy, you would receive him for a few months beneath

your roof, where I shall rest assured of his safety, and with a kind and disinterested friend; and now, Mr. Kemp, as I hear you are about to marry, I can no longer think it just to take that yearly allowance you have so nobly paid me." And here the four cottagers exclaimed together, not in the same words. Esther said, "Wonderful?" Her aunt Beal, "He that watereth, shall be watered again." Her mother, "dear me, Esther, child!" Her uncle, "quite right; very good, very good! If these methodists go on so, I shall turn methodist myself." "Mrs. Finch is not a methodist, uncle." "Well, well, child, so much the better. Well after all, this is an extraordinary business. Just as this hot headed boy gives away £50, a year, this warm hearted lady sends a hundred."

It was, indeed, providential, that a provision was making for all parties; and that without solicitation from those parties who needed it. This is no unusual case: and it is well said, that "those who watch providence, will never want a providence to watch." The every day circumstances of life warrant the conclusion, "the Lord will provide."

James Finch's visit to the Brow, though it could not be dispensed with, did not seem exactly timed; and Michael at first

thought he should remove him to the Mill for a season, as he wished to paint the house, and make a few repairs, before he brought Esther home; but, as Michael was never hasty, he waited to observe the character of James, before he took any step. He found him retiring, and modest; and, when encouraged, remarkably open and pleasing; but, what was most necessary in the present case, he found him completely to be trusted. In order to prepare him for home usefulness, he was continually confiding some business of trust, and always found him completely worthy of his confidence; so that, in three weeks after his arrival, he felt convinced he could leave home with perfect safety. "And here again," said Michael, "the Lord provides; for I should like to see my dear parents for a short time; and I could not have left home, unless some one had been here on whom I could rely."

There was one feature in the character of James, which, although it frequently made Michael smile, nevertheless pleased him; it was his veneration for the character of his sister: it amounted almost to idolatry. Whatever was faithful in the christian, amiable in the ministerial character, lovely in the female, James Finch was sure to rub his hands, and look with a

sort of glee, concluding, "Ah, that's just like my sister Jemima;" and Michael, who, as we have before said, had no taste for jests, could not help one day asking, "What, does Miss Jemima help Mr. Cooper?" "No, no," said James, smiling, "But I always take a walk with her after church, and we take our bibles, and read over the text; and sometimes, when she thinks Mr. Cooper did not go far enough, she says; 'now, you see, James, Bishop Beveridge, and Dr. Horne, and Archbishop Leighton, saw this in a different light;' and she makes it as clear to me! Oh, Mr. Kemp, I wish you knew her." "My dear James, I do know her, and respect her most highly." (*James.*) "Is it not very extraordinary, Sir, that my sister should understand so much better than my mother?" (*M.*) "Why, my dear fellow, it is the Lord who enlighteneth the understanding, in his own good time. Your dear mother always gave me some notion of what Cornelius was: and I have no doubt that her alms and her prayers are gone up for a memorial, before God, and that she will soon see everything clearly."

James's eyes glistened, for he loved his mother most dearly; and, indeed, she merited his regard. It might be said of her, "she did what she could." It was

the mist of pharisaical prejudice which prevented her doing more; she was faithful to the light she had; and it was never known that a person was in this state, without farther manifestation from above.

Brownrigg was so pleased with all the arrangements, and with the character of his intended nephew, that he was ready to second him in his wishes to bring matters to a close; and as he had now began his cottage, and was every day busy in his garden, he seemed to wish others as busy as himself, and was continually urging Esther to begin to get ready, while the modest little girl was trembling, lest her dear uncle should express this haste before Michael; but, she had no reason to fear. Brownrigg was a very correct man, and had an acute sense of propriety; and one evening, shortly after, Michael called, saying, "Esther, I think we are sufficiently known to each other, to judge whether the happiness of our future lives might be increased or diminished by our union. I should not wish to hasten you; but, as this is a period in which we may leave home as conveniently as any in the year, I was thinking early in the next week;"—and he paused for Esther's reply.

The timid girl looked upon him, and a thousand thoughts seemed to rush through

her mind; and the idea of the step she was about to take seemed so momentous, as to make her shudder; and her expression was so doubtful, as to alarm Michael. "I hope, Esther, you do not repent?" This question, put with much feeling, recalled her to the consideration of the pain she was giving, and she exclaimed, "Oh, no indeed." "Well, then, we will say Tuesday next;" and it remained fixed. And now, so strong was the impression of the momentary pang she had inflicted upon a heart so kind and generous, that from that time, Michael had no cause to doubt her regard for him.

On the following morning, as James Finch stood brushing his coat in the hall at the Brow, "I was thinking, my young friend," said Michael, "I was thinking to dispatch you homewards." James's colour had been heightened by the exercise of brushing, and was now flushed to crimson, by the words, "dispatch you home;" but Michael's extended hand soon reassured him; and he continued, "to your family I owe so much, James, and so many blessings have been conveyed to me through their means, that I should be indeed ungrateful, if I did not continue to associate them with the happiest events of my life. I am about to change my state, and

I have every reason to believe most happily; and it is my earnest wish to secure for my future partner the friendship of your dear sister. Do you think it would be possible for her, and agreeable to her, to be present at my nuptials?" "Delightful!" said James, and he skipped involuntarily. "When shall I go, Sir?" "As soon as you can conveniently get ready." And the animated boy replied, "I am ready as soon as my horse is saddled."

So the affair was arranged; and, ere the evening of the following day, Jemima was making her little preparations to join them. Mrs. Finch, in her own calm, placid manner, leaning on the shoulder of her darling son, said, "James, I have such a regard for Mr. Kemp, and with very good reason, that I really do not like to be left behind; and, as our little tax-cart is very light, you can continue with the horse you brought, and Jemima and I may accompany you together. Do you think it would be inconvenient?" "Dear, no, mother; I am sure Mr. Kemp would be very much pleased to see you."

We will not weary the reader by the description of the journey; but merely say, how agreeable was the meeting on both sides; the cordial welcome to Mrs. Finch, and the grateful surprise to Michael.

It was Friday evening when the travellers arrived. Jemima withdrew to the little room she had been accustomed to occupy in her uncle's time, to make herself a little comfortable, before she went to the Mill, to see Fanny; and Betty Smith came curtsying, to know, whether Mrs. Finch would please to occupy the large green bed, or would like better to go into the porch bed room, which was just new furnished with white dimity. "I think," said Jemima, "my mother would not like the green bed quite so well; my poor dear uncle died there."

There was something in Betty's look, which seemed to convey an idea to Jemima's mind, that she thought this weak, and, without any expression in words from Betty, Jemima observed, "we're not all constituted alike, Mrs. Smith; some minds are stronger than others." "Ah, ma'am," said Betty, "far be it from me to blame any body; I was thinking of something clean contrary to that. My father was once very well to do in the world, but he was ruined by being too good natured; he was bound for a neighbour, and they broke, and that ruined my poor father."

Jemima was looking, and wondering what this had to do with her mother and the green bed; but Betty cleared herself

by adding, "That very bed, Miss, my father bought quite new, at old Mr. Harvey's, the quaker; and when my poor father's goods were sold, your uncle, Miss, bought it. I never like to make it, and you don't like to sleep in it; no more does master. I believe he thinks it too good; so the poor old bed is kept to look at. But we have proud hearts ma'am; I am afraid I told you this story, that you might know I had seen better days." "Oh, my good Betty, I trust our best days are to come." "Yes, Madam, I do hope so too; and I believe it, and can almost say I know it. Oh, I have passed such a time here, with that good young man, my master; not a day but something is to be learned from him." "Pray, Betty, do you know any thing of the young person he intends marrying." "Yes, Madam, I know her very well, indeed: and, if my master had travelled England through, I do not think he could have met with a young person more deserving." "I am delighted to hear you say so, Betty; we are all very fond of Mr. Kemp, I assure you." "I am very glad of it, Ma'am; for I can say, that I love my master as if he were my son."

Mrs. Finch began to wonder at the long stay of Jemima, and sat with the tea-things before her, till she was weary; and Betty

began to feel it. She said, "perhaps, Ma'am, you do not know I had taken in the tea;" and she was swiftly with them in the parlour.

It was one feature in this excellent girl, that she studied every point in her mother's character, and moulded herself to her will, wherever that mould was safe; and as a pattern of order, and excellent management, none could surpass Mrs. Finch.

There is an awkwardness in the meeting of persons upon an important event, in which all feel interested, and upon which none care to speak; and perhaps this ice is not so easily broken by any, as one of Michael's character.

Shortly after they were seated, the following conversation took place. "From the kind interest you take in me, Madam, I cannot but suppose I have hitherto acted agreeably to your wishes; and, indeed, your generosity in relinquishing what I thought it my duty to pay you, convinces me that you do not disapprove any part of my conduct. I have been as prudent as I could, and I owe no man any thing; but I have added nothing to the stores my master left me, in the way of household goods. Betty is very prudent, and has never asked for an addition; but I should like to have every thing comforta-

ble and orderly for Esther, before she comes; would you, Madam, give us some notion of what is proper? My dear sister is so much engaged, and has so little experience in this way, that you will do me a great service, if you will point out what is necessary."

We should not trouble the reader with this, but to shew Betty's faithfulness; there was not a hole in the most common piece of linen. "How have you managed for towelling Betty?" said Mrs. Finch. "Why, Ma'am," said Betty, laughing, "a piece of sponge will save many a yard of linen, and a clean scrubbed dresser serves our men for a table-cloth; and the minute savings of Betty Smith, evinced that she was under the eye of Him who seeth the heart.

Mrs. Finch walked round with this respectable woman and saw the hand of thrifting frugality every where. Let no one say that religion is cant. Hypocrites may put on religion for a cloak; hypocrites may use the language of religious people; but, to those who know the influence of principle upon practice, a truly religious servant will be found an invaluable blessing. "When I first came here, Madam, I found the best bed in the garret, and master's napkins, you know his best half dozen that

you left behind for his use, they were used for I don't know what; but the scaldings I had to get out the spots, the boilings in milk, and the spreading on the grass-plat, till I could get them in order; and beautiful napkins they are. Master, poor man, did not know what was going on; but there is one thing we really do want, Ma'am, if you please, common sheets." every thing was seen to, and Betty's hand was seen miraculously preserving the property of her master.

Mrs. Finch was extremely pleased; and, when she descended to the little parlour, to relate what was needful, and to describe Betty's good management, Michael replied, "It is just what I expected, Madam, though I am no judge. Such an industrious creature; never a moment idle."

Michael was about to quit the room, but he turned back. "What sum, Ma'am, do you think might be sufficient to make all right. I had put by £20 for this purpose. Would it be enough?" "Oh, more than enough," said Mrs. Finch." "Well, madam, will you employ whatever is over in any thing necessary for Betty; but do not give it her, for she will not lay it out;" and now, the difficulty was, to get Betty to say what would be useful to

her. She had no wants; she had not, indeed, she had enough, and abounded. "Dear me, madam, don't think about me; I am a plain body; if I have only my clean cap and apron, you know, ma'am, I am dressed."

At length, with some difficulty, she was prevailed upon to own, that a little linen would be useful; and, if the reader can fancy Betty's gratitude and surprize, at the gift of a new bonnet and cloak for the wedding, they will not go beyond the occasion, if they conceive, that her heart was lifted in prayer to God, grateful prayer and praise.

Tuesday came, and the sun streamed through the lattice of Esther's window, and illuminated the articles in her little room. But she did not wait for his rising; she had long risen from her rustic couch; she had turned over the Scriptures for some suitable portion, and she had repeated her favourite hymn, "Oh, for a closer walk with God," ere his first beams tipped the distant hill.

The fine carol of a favourite blackbird was pouring his liquid note on the morning air; she had opened the window, and was walking up and down her little apartment when her mother entered. "Esther child, are you well?" "Quite well, dear mother;

but do leave me." "Hetty, if you can truly say you are quite well, I will leave you; but child, I have heard you walking up and down for some time." "Mother, I am not ashamed to tell you, that I have been composing my mind, by inquiring as to the Lord's will concerning me, by searching the Scriptures, to know what will best suit the station upon which I am entering, by devoting myself anew to Him, who hath cared for me all my life." "Quite right, my Hetty;" and she kissed her cheek, and left her.

"What changes have taken place; what worldly prosperity! Ah, 'tis easier to bear adversity. Did not Agar say, 'give me neither poverty nor riches, lest I be poor, and steal; lest I be rich, and say, who is the Lord.' Hitherto, God hath kept me; I have known no want, and now, here is my kind, providing uncle, and a friend who has selected me in preference to many more deserving, I have no doubt. May I be kept; may I ever remember that I have been raised from comparative poverty, to a state of ease and security; may the few anxieties I have experienced, in providing for myself and my dear parent, keep me thoughtful, and pitiful towards others."

Thus prayed this christian girl; and,

after neatly dressing herself, she sat down to put the lace to her aunt's and her mother's cap. She had adhered to the pattern they usually wore; but she had trimmed them with the finest lace that her modest purse could afford; and, she had nearly completed her job, and was snipping the white ribands which were to go plain round their heads, when William from the Brow came clattering at the gate, asking to speak with Esther, with a large parcel on his head. "I would ha' come last night, Ma'am; indeed I did come, but you were all shut up, and I was afraid of coming too soon this morning; because, says I to myself, my mistress that is to be, will have plenty to think on to-morrow. Well, Ma'am, the good old squire, your uncle, he's been in a sad taking. These things that I have got here, why I have been after them to the coach, bless my heart, aye, ten times, I am sure, within the last fortnight; and, dear me, how angry he have been with some body he calls Peggy. Says he, last night, says he, 'why that girl deserves to go into the tread-mill; and Madam Tucker, too, did not I charge her;' but, Ma'am, it is no good telling you all he said; he was very angry, I assure you. And now, Madam, he desired me to tell you, that you are to be sure to put on

what is in that box; and you, Ma'am," said he, bowing to Margaret and Mary. "Oh, dear me," said Margaret, "what shall we do?" But Mary looked at her sister, as much as to say, don't speak before the man. "Give my duty to my uncle," said Esther, and she put her hand into her pocket to remunerate William for his trouble. "No, Ma'am," said William, "I cannot take that; it is a pleasure for me to wait on you; and I hope I shall wait on you many a year yet. But dear me, I must go home: for master don't know I'm out, and he will be wanting me." "Come, Esther, child, you must have your breakfast."

Esther constrained herself to eat, and she began to unpack the box; and, as she spread the articles upon the large oak table, she kept saying to herself, "how very kind, and so well chosen, mother." There was for each of his sisters a plain grey Irish stuff; for Esther, a nice India muslin gown, a silk spencer, a white chip bonnet lined with sarsnet, and tied with a sarsnet riband, several pairs of gloves; and, what was very remarkable, and showed the drollery of Brownrigg, there was a shoe of Esther's, which he had stolen for a pattern, and two or three pair with it of new ones, very nicely made, and half a

dozen pair of stockings. Nothing seemed forgotten.

Esther had missed this shoe for a long time, and had laid the loss upon a puppy that sometimes came into the cottage; and she now remembered that her uncle had said, "he had no doubt some puppy had taken it."

They were all obliged to go and change their dress; for they knew it would be a great offence, if they did not. The aunt and mother's gowns were rather small; for Betty Smith had been the guide, and she was considerably smaller than either; but they managed very well, and were completely dressed in the gifts of their kind relative, ere they heard his whistle, "Let the merry bells ring round;" an air of which he was particularly fond, and which, on this day, seemed remarkably well suited.

As soon as he entered, he drew Esther to the window, he seated himself in it, drew her down upon his knee; and, putting his hat beside him, gave her a kiss, and told her to cheer up; asked if her shoes fitted, and whether he had not said right, that some puppy had taken it; and, drawing from his pocket a purse, with twenty sovereigns, he said, "There, child, is pin-money for you." "My dear uncle what

can I do to show you my gratitude?" "Do, child; why, hold up your head, and look a little cheerful. All the way I came, the birds were singing, and we are all as brisk at the Brow Farm, and looking as fresh. There is a fine large party there. There is the old Patriarch, old Kemp, and his dove; there is the handsome Mr. Stephen, and his tripping fair one; and I have dressed his son out in a French-grey jacket, and nankeen pantaloons, with a new black beaver cap, and I have had a sad battle with his primitive uncle, about a handsome black feather, which it was my fancy to stick in the front of it. His mother was on my side, I could see; for she said "only to day, Michael; let him wear it to day." But he thought it was better to return it to the people, as it was only putting foolish notions in the boy's head; so I left them to settle it. Then, there is the tall stripling, Mr. Finch, and his fair sister, and his correct mother; by the way, she is a very fine woman, that Mrs. Finch; and Betty Smith, my favourite Betty, she has got on a quite new snuff-coloured gown, to match my coat. Poor creature, they have been laughing at her all the morning." "They, uncle, who?" "Why, James Finch and I my dear." "Aye, I thought." "Yes,

yes; you thought your sober swain could not laugh, when you were not there. Well, you are a good girl. Let me see; turn round. I hope you were not dressed when your clothes came." They all smiled. "Well, madam Beal, did I fit you." "A very little too small, brother." "Well, if there is enough to let out, that is no matter." "Plenty, my dear brother; you have been very kind to us." "Come, let us see, what's o'clock; we are to meet at the back of the spinning-school. I am to escort my fair niece. Mr. Michael is to give his arm to Miss Jemima, the handsome Mr. Stephen is to come and fetch you two ladies, and Mr. Finch gives his arm to the pretty Fanny. When we meet, Madam Finch has engaged herself to me on the other side, and there is a young sister of Mr. Michael's, and a very silly looking young man, a brother as I understand. There is an arch, well looking young man, who straggled in just now, and he was invited to stay; indeed, I think he intended it. The good old folks are to remain till Monday when they talk of meeting you at P——. Where the great folks the bride and bridegroom are going, I can't say I know."

Esther smiled, though her heart sunk at the thought of so public a wedding; and

now they set forward, a round-about way, by the back of the village. "We are in very good time," said Brownrigg; "we will take it coolly. Exactly at nine, I promised;" and now, every amusing thing that could enter into the mind of the kind uncle, and divert Esther from too much thought, was communicated. "The weather was delightful; he thought the birds sang a more sprightly carol than usual; and how delightful was the smell of the new-mown hay. And, Esther, child, did you know that I had bought a horse and gig, and that I mean to lend it you; for I see your husband is a very good whip? And, besides, I think it will be handy to carry your mother and your aunt about." "Dear, kind brother," said Mary and Margaret, in one breath. "And here we are," said he; "here come the cavalcade."

Poor Esther was trembling at the sight of Mr. and Mrs. Kemp; and Michael came forward, putting her hand into that of his mother, whose eye beamed christian gentleness. "Ah," said Fanny Meredith, "this is our sweet Esther, whom we all love so dearly."

The few trees that surrounded the church-yard, were in their richest beauty. Under a Spanish chesnut, was a small seat,

Mr. Lascelles sat reading; and his two daughters leaning over his shoulder, seemed to join him. At the sight of the party, he rose; and, bowing with a dignified grace all his own, he stepped forward, without particularly noticing any one. They filled the four chancel-pews, while the clerk arranged; and, as soon as Mr. Lascelles had put on his surplice, and was within the rail, he motioned with his hand for them to come forward.

After the first address, inquiring whether any one objected, there was a slight rustle, that made every one start; and, to the no small annoyance of Esther and Michael, the whole family of the Jennings's, who had crouched down in a distant pew, now started up, and came forward. They were dressed in all the finery they could collect. This was a sad thing for poor Joe; and it was very doubtful to his brother, if this unexpected meeting would not again unsettle him. However, this was no moment for conjecture; the whole thought was concentrated, and the heart devoted to the sacred subject in which they were engaged.

Mr. Brownrigg knew nothing of these people; but he stood half upright, by the side of his darling niece, and gave her hand to Michael, with an air equally impressive and imposing, as though he would have

said, "there, Sir, I make you a very handsome present;" and poor Esther was hot and cold, and could scarcely articulate, when she first began. She soon recovered, and said, most solemnly, "I, Esther, take thee, Michael," with a musical and liquid note, and with the reverence and solemn awe, due to him in whose presence she pledged herself, "For better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love cherish and to obey till death us do part." Michael spoke with his deep and manly voice, calmly, and slowly, as though he was pleased thus to devote himself to his gentle partner; and, as soon as the service was over, bowing respectfully to Mr. Lascelles, he slipped the hand of the newly betrothed beneath his arm, passed the Jennings's without a single glance, and was far on his way to the Brow, ere the party joined him.

No sooner did Brownrigg overtake him, than he said, "You Sir, what do you mean by running off with my niece?" Michael turned round, smiling, when Brownrigg continued, "but, Sir, you are not married yet." "Not married?" "No; you must come back and sign your names." "Are those ladies gone yet, Mr. Brownrigg?" "They are not in the church, but, they are all gathered round Mr. Joseph under the

Spanish chesnut, and seem *amazingly* glad to see him." "Well, we must leave it," said Michael. "Leave it," said Brownrigg, "I tell you, you must not leave it; you must come and finish it. You see, Esther, he wanted a hole to creep out at." "No, indeed," said Michael, smiling. "But I will explain this to you another time;" and they turned round.

If ever Michael felt awkwardly, this was the moment. He could not explain to Mr. Lascelles, or any one, the cause of this haste; and, when he returned, there was a subdued smile on every countenance, and a triumphant archness on that of Brownrigg, as though he would say, "I have caught them."

Names were at length signed, and the parties returned in good order to the Brow. Joe was constrained to join them; and was offering his arm to Miss Jemima, but awkwardly bidding farewell to Miss Louisa, and promising to come again in the afternoon; Brownrigg slipped the lady's hand beneath his arm; and, looking back upon Joe, said, in a soft tone, "How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away," and left him in his own lack-a-daysical manner, to find his way to the Brow.

As soon as the general congratulations were offered, as they ascended the hill Michael turned to Mr. Brownrigg, saying; "I should like to consult you about something." Brownrigg nodded, "When you will." Betty Smith had slipped by, and was curtsying, with her eyes downcast, as her master passed; and, "The Lord, bless you Sir," in her most respectful tone; "and, Sir, it is all spread, it is all spread in the great parlour." What could be spread, Michael did not know; he supposed Mrs. Finch had given orders. But no, Mrs. Lascelles, whose tender health never permitted her personally to share in the benevolent offices of her husband, was nevertheless with him in spirit, and was continually planning some little kind office. She had sent the gardener and her own maid, with flowers and fruits, and little delicacies of every kind, with a neat dessert service; and, at the moment when Mr. Lascelles set out for the church, these willing domestics departed for the Brow. There was a gift for the bride and the bridegroom, a neatly bound pocket bible and prayer-book for each, with the kindest wishes in a blank leaf, and this text in Michael's, "For I know Him, that he will command his children and his household after him," &c.; and in

Esther's, "Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

These kind attentions, so soothing to a grateful mind, were received in genial soil; and the inquiry, 'what can we do to show our gratitude to Mrs. Lascelles?' immediately followed. But there was nothing to be done. They could pray for her; but she wanted nothing; and they could only feel, that they were insolvent debtors. But James Brown showed that he was in the secret; for, taking up the finest collection of flowers, said "These are for Mrs. Kemp." Poor Esther was so new to the name, that she thought it was for her mother; and, when it was presented to her, her uncle was obliged to say, "There, Esther, child, why don't you take your offering?" and she received it gratefully.

It required some courage on the part of Michael, in such a mixed circle, to know how to solemnize that day, which he considered as the most important of his life. But he could not rest; it must be; and, after they had eaten their fruit, he rose, and casting his eyes down, he said, "It would be an offensive suspicion, were I to think for a moment, that what I am about to propose could be unpleasing to any one here; our kind friend, Mr. Las-

celles, has given us his blessing in the temple, and he has condescended to promise me, my dear Esther, (and he looked kindly on her), that he will bless us in our family." There was a still murmur of approbation through the circle, and Brownrigg observed, "he is a very fine man, and a very gentlemanly man, and I dare say, will speak very much to the purpose." Neither Mary Humphries nor her sister ventured to look up.

It was about an hour after they had returned from the church, that a note from Mr. Lascelles was put into Michael's hand. "As the little circumstance in the morning seemed to put us off our guard, I forgot to inquire at what hour you would wish to see me; and, as I should grieve to derange any of your plans, send me word by the bearer, when I shall come." Michael stepped out to see who the bearer was. It was Robinson, Mr, Lascelles's personal servant; who, when Michael saw him, put out his hand very cordially, saying, "how glad he was of the opportunity to wish him health and happiness." "Will you be so good, Sir, as to say to Mr. Lascelles, that as soon as it suits his convenience, we shall be most happy to see him, as we shall begin our little journey when we have dined." "I was to step

back, to let my master know." So, looking kindly at the newly-married, Robinson departed; and, ere Michael reached the sitting-room again, Mr. Brownrigg came to him, and enquired when the consultation was to take place; "Now, if you please, Sir:" and he related the circumstances of Miss Jennings's attachment to Joe, and how the sight of those ladies had made him run so quickly from church, and his fears that Joe's smothered flame would burst out afresh; and the more so, as those kind young ladies seemed disposed to meet him more than half way. "Why, my good Sir, what can you do? if the young man will marry, he must marry. I don't know what *metal* he's made of; but, as for me, if you were to watch me, and try to prevent me in any step I had a mind to take, you would only strengthen my resolution, and push me to the very point from which you wished to drive me. You see, Mr. Kemp, (and I suppose you know something of the same spirit), we men are obstinate fellows. Pat us, and stroke us, and all goes well; but, when once you drive us, we turn round, and are very apt to do the thing you would prevent."

Michael suffered Mr. Brownrigg to run on to the end. He then said, "No, Sir;

I am far from wishing to thwart my dear brother in any thing that could add to his happiness; but, if you knew those young women, the manner in which they have been brought up, so entirely unsuited to a working lad, like Joe, I am sure you would agree with me, that it would be ruin to him to be married to such a young lady: but you do not know them, Sir." "Whew, whew," said Mr. Brownrigg, whistling, "not know them; why, I know them as well as if I had lived with them a twelvemonth; they are so anxious to be married, that they leaped the bounds of decency this morning, and came to the last place they should have entered. Why, Sir, a delicate young lady would have run a mile, rather than come into your church this morning. I don't know them! why, I know them perfectly. Why, Sir, they would have me, if I were to ask it. I should be afraid of their snares, and their pretty ways, but they don't catch old birds with chaff. Jonathan Brownrigg, and the pretty little Miss Tiny." Here Michael started in wonder, how Brownrigg should have hit upon the name, when he remembered that Betty was in converse with the old gentleman one morning. "Very foolish, very foolish," said Michael to himself; "almost the only foolish thing I ever knew

Betty do." "Well, Sir, suppose you leave Mr. Joseph to me; he seems very well disposed to scrape acquaintance with me." "But how will you manage, Sir? You must not mention that I have had any conversation with you. The truth is, my poor brother is very weak, and must be governed; yet, like most weak people, he thinks himself quite competent to judge of every thing. Poor fellow; far be it from me to thwart him unkindly." "Well, Sir, all this we understand," said Brownrigg; "and, while you take your little journey, Mr. Joseph and I can go visiting." "What," said Michael, "would you let him go?" "Yes, certainly, I would; and I should like to go with him." "I hope, Sir, you will not let him do any thing dishonourable. We have good reason to believe, that old Mr. Jennings's affairs are in an uncomfortable state. He is burthened with a family brought up in affluence, with minds ill-prepared to meet adversity. But I know that God can do all things, and I must leave this with him." "Well, well, Sir, trust me;" and they returned to the parlour.

Jemima Finch, and Mrs. Kemp, and the young Mrs. Kemp, were in one group. The elder Kemp and Mrs. Finch were conversing together; Mary and Margaret,

Stephen and Fanny, formed another ; Mr. Brownrigg and Michael returned to the table. They all assembled to enquire when Mr. Lascelles was expected. Mrs. Finch, who then kindly acted as mistress of the Brow for that day, proposed a turn in the garden, that all might be cleared against Mr. Lascelles's arrival.

This good man did not keep them long after church. He had gone to the spinning-school, sent Robinson forward, and there waited the return of his messenger ; and his dear daughters accompanied him. These young ladies, of whom little mention has been made, entered with delight into all the plans of their father, and of their mother; and, as worldly young women claim the period of adolescence for entering upon its pleasures, so these feeling, sprightly girls, to relieve mamma from cares, her delicate frame was hardly able to sustain, and to accompany papa in his visits of mercy to the cottagers. There was one danger; they were almost idolized in this village; and papa was often obliged to say, "Take care, my pretty ones;" and, "except a man be born again;" "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor;" and many such texts did he quote, to keep his dear, untried travellers, from resting short of that dependance which is alone safe.

Esther at first felt the entrance of those young ladies a painful addition. She had never been in a room with them, except at the lecture, and she clung close to Michael's chair for protection. But, as soon as they were all seated, and the dear Pastor had opened the "Big Book," she felt she was in a higher presence, and her timidity subsided. He read the 84th Psalm: and, after opening the Bible, and, as was his custom, suffering the leaves to fall over one arm, while the other was, reverently elevated, he began, "In this christian circle, there is less need for exhortation to choose the good way, than for warning to continue therein; not to be weary in well doing; not, as though we had already attained, or were already perfect; but, as a good man said, 'no christian must put off his armour, till he puts on his shroud.' We have a wily enemy. He will persuade us that we *know* such things, as *these*; and, filling us with a self satisfied spirit, will tempt us to forget, that we bear about us a body of sin and of death. In this 84*th Psalm*, the royal poet bursts into an enraptured strain of praise. 'How amiable &c. &c.' We have not known the privation, perhaps, which led to this longing, this thirsting, for the courts of the Lord. It is to be feared, if I may judge from *my own heart*, that there have

been moments, and these not a few, in which we have not duly estimated the blessing of public worship. 'But we have a High Priest, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities; we have an open fountain, for the cleansing of our sin; we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous,' This blessing can only be estimated by those who feel its need. But should *sickness* visit us; should any breach be made upon this happy circle, (a sort of shiver ran through the assembly); should the shutters of our apartment be closed, and the light of the natural sun be excluded, and our post by the sick bed become the post of observation, darker every hour; *then* shall we exclaim, 'my soul longeth, yea even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord.'

"We must, like the sparrow, build our nests nigh to his altars; for all meaner resting places must fail us in these hours of sorrow and suffering." Mr. Brownrigg fidgetted and shifted his crossed leg. He thought to himself, "a very sensible man, certainly; but this is more like a funeral sermon, than a nuptial blessing." Mr. Lascelles perceived not his displeasure, though his dear relatives *did*. "But," said the venerable minister rising in his feelings, as he glanced upon Michael and Esther "we turn with pleasure to the nuptial benedic-

tion; because we feel sure that it is suitable, and well applied here. 'Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still be praising thee.' To dwell there, cannot surely mean, you will say, our taking up our abode in the Temple of the Lord. Assuredly not. But he who is found continually visiting those courts where God especially dispenses his blessing. We may say, that his blessing peculiarly rests on those who place their strength in him; who, conscious that no good dwelleth in them, but as that good is imparted, find their faith strengthened, and their hope brightened in every step of their pilgrimage I know not that I *could* contemplate a scene which conveys to my mind more unmixed pleasure, than the present. I can hear those who can witness that the Lord is faithful; who can say with Jacob, 'with my staff I passed over this Jordan and now I am become two bands;'" here old Kemp looked up involuntarily; for, as was his custom, he was leaning on his stick, with his head bowed on his hands; and Joe, whose vacant stare seemed as though he comprehended nothing, appeared to wonder that Mr. Lascelles should speak about his father's stick. Michael was concentrated. Fanny, who was present to every thing, saw the wondering folly of poor Joe; and, closing her eyes, as

though she would shut out the disturbance it would cause her, gathered up her thoughts, resolving to look no more that way. "We trust that our strength is in him; and oh, that as we pass through this valley, we may be refreshed in every thirsty step by the water of life. May the blessing from above, descend as the rain. Oh, that the capacities for enjoyment may be filled by *no meaner water;* then shall we go from strength to strength, till each of us shall appear in Zion before our God!" Then, turning the exhortation into prayer, he clasped his hands, and looking upward, continued, "Oh, Lord God of Hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Observe, my beloved young friends, *who* was the shield of David. 'Behold, O God,' he says, (and the regard of the Lord was what he sought,) '*Look* upon the face of thine anointed.' He prefers the meanest station in God's House, to the most sumptuous abode of wickedness; and wherefore? 'Because the Lord is a sun to *enlighten*; a shield to *defend*; he giveth *grace* here, *glory hereafter* and no good thing will he withhold from those that walk uprightly.' Let us ever remember what I have before adverted to, that though we have long professed ourselves devoted to the cause of the gospel; and though

our hopes seem founded, and no doubt are founded, on that *Rock* smitten for us, 'not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect; but I follow on,' &c. should be our language. It was well said, that the grace of yesterday will not do for to day; and so many instances of awful apostacy may be cited, as would make the stoutest tremble. No, let us be found humbly waiting at the doors of His house. We have had sweet, and continued proofs, where the head of this family has placed his trust; we have seen with unmixed delight, that he hath been working out his salvation with fear and trembling, knowing who worketh in him, both to will and to do; but to God be all the glory; for we may truly say, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou regardest him.' Yet this we will say, 'Weak in ourselves, yet strengthened by his power, we can do all things;' and 'I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.' We may sometimes judge by the temporal blessings the Lord bestows upon us, that his favour is with us; and, as an earthly good, what is so great as such an

help-meet, as may never throw a stumbling-block in the way of our best interests? And here is one to whose modest virtues I must bear testimony; one who will, I am sure, do him good, and not evil; who, tried in the fire of adversity, hath been contented to pursue her modest way, unnoticed and unknown. Unknown to fellow mortals, indeed, but well-known to Him, whose favour is life. Oh, my faithful little girl, may the days of thy prosperity find thee still trusting in Him, who hath led thee hitherto. Then may we safely say, 'That the Lord, the Lord of Hosts, will be with you, and the God of Jacob will be your refuge.'" And now, rising reverently, and spreading his hands, he said, "No good will he withhold from you, if you walk uprightly; for the Lord of Hosts will bless those that trust in Him. Now, may the God of your Father help you; may the Almighty bless you with the blessing of Heaven above, and of the earth beneath."

Esther had blushed and trembled, and the tears had flowed plentifully; and, "Let us pray," was a cheerful relief to this season of excitement. The prayer was brief, for the expounding had been long; and the usual blessing was then pronounced, "the Lord lift up the light of his life-giving countenance upon you, and give you peace." They

offered him a little of their raspberry wine, which he took smiling: and, as the bride brought it herself, he took that opportunity to say, "She must do Mrs. Lascelles the favour to call upon her." Esther looked up in astonishment at the word favour; and the good man said, "do you not know that you are the queen of the day, and must remain so till another bride comes." And he looked archly smiling at Jemima, and said, "I think I have seen you here before; but I must not steal sheep from my brother Cooper's flock."

This quiet girl stood the laugh very comfortably; but it is remarkable that Joe, who could understand no other subject, was quite awake to this, and stood rubbing his long hands, and laughing, when every one else had done.

Now the Lascelles's withdrew, and dinner was announced, clean and plentiful; and the kind-hearted, motherly Mrs. Finch, and Mrs. Kemp, took Esther between them, and thus saved her the fatigue and the blushing, which taking her own seat might have caused. "Come, come," said Mr. Brownrigg. "I intend to be master to day: so he made Michael sit down promiscuously with his guests, and there was no want of footmen; for Ste-

phen and Jem were as brisk and as happy, though they had both had the modesty to apologize to Mrs Finch, for sitting in her presence. "Good and respectable young men," she replied, "I desire these distinctions may be forgotten between us." Michael avoided looking up, lest he should meet Jem's eye. James was awake to it; he remembered the folly of his boyish days; he also kept his eye very busy on objects more remote from his mind.

When the meal was passed, Betty Smith and William were invited in, to drink health to the newly-married. It was drank on the part of Betty, with tears and with trembling; for she loved both her master and her new mistress. To Margaret and to Mary she owed her comfortable dwelling: and, for many years, the kind hand of Esther had done every little job in the way of dress to which Betty was incompetent. She was Betty Smith's milliner and mantua-maker, and was only paid in thanks and in blessing; for Esther was so handy with her needle and her scissors, that she * "gai'd auld claes look amaist like new." How will the willing mind, and the active finger, dispense their benefits, while ignorance gapes and wonders, and closes with,

* Vide Cotter's Saturday Night.

"Well, for my part, I never did like work." But, be it remembered, that this feminine employment is indispensable in certain ranks of life; pleasant and useful in all. Poets have immortalized the needle, and the painter's pencil hath often given us the quiet form of woman, while the fingers are busily engaged, seeming rapt in calm speculation, or the aspirations of devotion. 'Tis woman's purest employment; it courts no praise; it is the handmaid of charity, and executes that which the mind prompts; and many a useful work of the finger may be accomplished, even when sight begins to weaken, and taste for more elaborate performance fades. Pardon this long digression, my amiable young country-women; but to me few sights are more endearing, than the family group, seated at their little works, while the father or the brother of that family reads some judicious author. The harmony of taste, and agreement of sentiment, draw the band closer, and shut out many an unprofitable censure, and many an idle word.

"And now," said Brownrigg, "good people, it's three o'clock and past, and some folks intend to travel twenty miles, and some folks are going out to tea." "That's me," thought Joseph. "Yes,

yes, I must go; I promised Miss Louisa." No one heard him but Brownrigg, next to whom he was sitting; and he was astonished, when the latter said to him, "I should like to go with you, Mr. Joseph." He could only wonder in himself, and could scarcely repress the expression of that wonder. "Why, sure," thought he, "Mr. Brownrigg won't go;" and indeed he hoped he would not. But never did Brownrigg give up a project, especially if it amused him; and this greatly amused him. He had planned what he should say; how he should introduce himself, and had no doubt of being greatly entertained. And perhaps nothing could have happened better to divert poor Mary Humphries from the separation that was about to take place, than what she thought of this foolish business of her brother's visit to Sizors. What he could be thinking of; what was the intention of his making such an acquaintance, they could neither of them conceive. He was neither going to explain, nor excuse: and, after poor Joseph's weak head had laboured some time with the enquiry, "what could Mr. Brownrigg mean?" he at last brought out, "Do you really mean to go, Sir?" and Brownrigg bowed very gravely. "Yes, Sir, I do. I hope you have no

objection?" "Me, Sir. No, Sir; but do you know Mr. Jennings?" "There is a beginning for all things, you know, Sir. I am going to settle in this country, Mr. Kemp, and it is pleasant to be acquainted with our neighbours." Joe could say no more; so, however unwillingly, he was constrained to accept Mr. Brownrigg's company; and, just as the clock struck four, they sallied out together. Old Kemp looked very uneasily at Joe; and Brownrigg, perceiving it, spoke in a sort of half whisper, "don't be uneasy, Sir, I shall not lose sight of this stripling."

Esther had changed her dress, and was in a neat nankeen pelisse, and cambric muslin bonnet, with her dove-coloured cloak upon her arm, waiting Michael's pleasure. Her thoughtful mother had packed all neatly in the chaise-box, and Betty Smith had provided for her master. There was nothing wanting; but lest Joe should give him the slip, Brownrigg had appointed him to hand in his new sister; and, as Joe thought it the post of honour, and never saw far beyond the present moment, he had not the slightest suspicion of Brownrigg's scheme.

Mary Humphries, though quite sensible of the blessing of such a son-in-law as Michael, had that morning parted with her

all, and her heart swelled with distress the more painful, that she was constrained to conceal it. "Ah!" thought she, "how I shall miss that dear creature; the first sight my eyes opened on every morning was her dear face, 'mother, it is time for you to rise.'" Margaret Beal saw this; indeed, she dreaded the parting moment, and watched Mary with the kindness of a sister. She got her into the garden, and began to state what a blessing it was that Esther was so well provided for. "Oh yes, I know it, I know it; I am an ungrateful creature, 'tis all selfishness, Margaret, but I must weep—you must let me alone." Betty Smith, whose eye was upon every one, guessed poor Mary's sorrow, and followed them into the garden. "Ah!" said she, "I knew how it would be, but you know she will be back in a day or two, for master cannot stay long." "I am quite ashamed, Betty, I really am; but if you knew what Esther has been to me——" Margaret Beal thought it best to leave her to herself; so they kept walking up and down, Mary weeping, till at last, feeling conscious that something was due to Mrs. Kemp and the rest of the party, she returned to the parlour, where they were all assembled. Stephen had been home to fetch his children from a neighbour's, where they had been lodged

for safety; and the little Jemima came as neat as cambric muslin could make her; and the boy in his grey dress, and black hat and feather; and poor Mary was glad of this relief, and began to caress the young ones, taking the little girl upon her knee. The sight of Esther's hem-stitch round the sleeve of the child's frock recalled all her pleasant activity and willing services: the child, looking in her face, exclaimed, "Oh! Missey Hum, what for you cry? Your tooth ache?" Fanny had been very poorly lately with this complaint, and the young innocent was sympathising. The little Michael, who was a most manly spirited boy, full of imitation and kindness, riggled down from his grandmother's knee, and was off to the kitchen, where, pulling and tugging a small pocket handkerchief, which his mother had fastened firmly between his vest and trowsers, he succeeded in breaking the loop; and, heating it as hot as he could, crumpled it up in his little fat hands, and brought it to Mary. "The dear, kind child!" said Mrs. Finch, "what a sensible boy it is!" And Jemima caught his hand. "How came you to think of such a thing?" said she. And Fanny explained it, by saying, he often warmed the handkerchief for her when she had the tooth-ache.

"Dear child, dear sensible child," said

this kind lady, " how very pleasing it is to see such infants so feeling." " Yes," said Fanny, and she passed her maternal arm round her boy, and with the other parted the hair on his open forehead, and imprinted a kiss. " He is a kind-hearted little poppet, and his mother loves him, how dearly who can tell." Mrs. Finch guessed; "That tall boy," said she, looking at James, and stretching out a hand to Michael, " was once a pet boy like you." " Oh," said the young one, " I am not mother's pet, I am mother's man;" and he drew up to make as much of himself as he could. " Little Jem is mother's pet." " Yes, I are," said the little one; and she nestled her head into her mother's lap, and kissing her arms, while the mother looked delight on each.

Where habit hath made one being necessary to another, time only can heal the breach. Thus it was with Mary and Margaret: they felt that they should return to their homes lonely and dull; but, when they considered how mercifully God had appeared for them, and that they were permitted still to comfort and solace each other, they resolved to resist what they were constrained to own was rebellion in a mild form. There were not wanting some to pity Betty Smith, but it was ma-

lignant pity—it was, " Poor Betty, she had a fine time of it, plenty of good things she has fingered ; she has had the government in her own hands, she had rendered no account, they dared to say ; all the goose feathers, all the hen feathers, she has had plenty." " Plenty of what?" " Oh, one thing or tother, I don't know what, can't justly say, but every thing, I suppose it will make a great change for she. They supposed Mrs. Kemp would keep her keys now." " Of course she will," said one and another. This ill-natured pity had travelled round, and just before Mary and Margaret went home, the good creature opened her heart, said she was sure her hands were clean, and if they heard any thing, hoped they would clear her, and not give ear to any evil report. " Why, do we not know you?" said Margaret, " and have we not always known you?" said Mary. " Yes, but who can tell what unjust suspicions might make master think." " Ah, Betty," replied Margaret, " I see you have not learnt your lesson perfect ; Arn't you to pass through evil report and good report? Is your mistress given to unjust judgment? and has your master ever given ear to unjust reports?" " Never." " Then why should you doubt them now ; and if, poor frail

creatures as they are, they should do wrong; why have you not a God to go to? What says St. Paul? 'As deceivers, and yet true.' This is Paul's description of the Christian; and if he thus suffered, who are we, Betty?" Betty wiped a tear from her eye; and when, after the fatigue of the wedding-day was over, she drew near the throne of mercy: she found her best consolation in spreading all before Him to whom all hearts are open. There she whispered her sorrows and her doubts, and her poor oppressed bosom became lighter as she breathed the incense of prayer and praise.

END OF PART I.

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